Words in Season:

From that late Worthy Sufferer, and Servant of the Lord Jesus, an able Minister of the *New-Testament*, according to that Character, 2 *Cor.* 6. 4, 5, &c. *Ps.* 8. 40. 5.

Mr. *Abraham Cheare*,

VIZ.

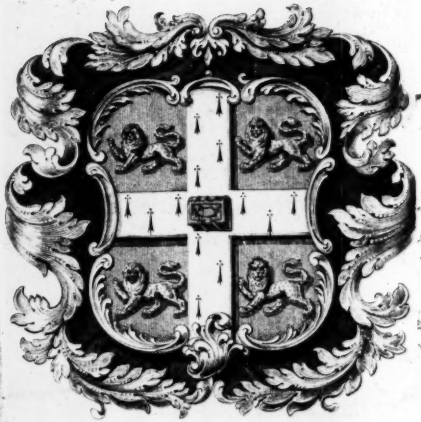
I. Faith's Conquest, over the Tortures and Tenders of an Hour of Temptation, on *Heb.* 11. 35.

II. The Embalming of a Dead Cause, on *Mark* 14. 8.

III. Remarkable Discourses on his Dying-Bed, with Copies and Extracts of Letters, on several occasions.

Useful for those, whose Hearts are engaged to serve the Will of God, in this Generation.

London, Printed for *Nathan Brookes*, in *Bartholomew-Close*, 1668.



Academiæ Cantabrigiensis
Liber.

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The Publiſher to the READER.

I Doubt not but the following Diſcourſes carry ſo much evidence of Truth and Holineſs, as will ſufficiently commend them to the Hearts and Conſciences of the upright, as proceeding from one, who believed, and therefore ſpake; delivered what he received, as a Scribe inſtructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, the Fear of the Lord being evidently his treaſure, wherein he walked all the day long, and by which he was enabled to bear thoſe hard things, which a conſtant Spirit, in keeping the Commandments of God and Faith of Jeſus, holding faſt the Word and Works of God, drew upon him bringing him into fellowſhip with tryals and ſufferings, upon the Wayes, Truths, Intereſt, and People of the Lord in this Generation.

It may highly concern the living, to lay to heart the removal of Prophets and holy Ones, true mourners, that ſought to ſtand in the Gap, to turn away wrath, that it might not come to the utmoſt.

I am ſure it hath a ſad aſpect, when even a Profeſſing (but too much complying) People, ſtand as on the other ſide, or at a diſtance from thoſe who earneſtly contend for the Faith, holding faſt what they have received, and are far from right laying to heart, That through the hatred of the world, righteous men periſh, and merciful men are taken away.

I doubt not, but there remains a remnant, whoſe minds by ſuch providences are deeply impreſſed, well-nigh to over-whelming, further than help is given and the hand ſtretched forth, to lead to the Rock that is

higher than we, when in all parts and corners the beauty and glory is cutting off as a fading flower; and how hard is it to ſpeak and do as becometh, under ſuch aſtoniſhing ſtroaks, and with him, Ezek. 24. 18. *to hold on, doing as the Lord Commands, I am perſwaded that ſigh often goes up,* Ezek. 11. 13. *with* Amos 7. 5. O Lord, ceaſe I beſeech thee, by whom ſhall *Jacob* ariſe, for he is ſmall. *The reviving and deſired iſſues of that work falling under great diſtruſts, even with thoſe that are the Friends thereof, when (if I may allude to it,* Luke 24. 19, &c.) *thoſe, who are as Prophets, mighty in deed and word before God and all the People, Inſtruments poliſhed to carry it on to an expected end, are cut off and laying aſide daily, ſo hard is it for us to underſtand that* thus it ought to be, *that ſo the excellency of the power, may be acknowledged to be of God and not of men, that all may ſee* his Work is perfect, his Word is tryed, *with whom is no reſtraint, for he ſendeth by whom he will, the reſidue of the Spirit being with him, who will in due time raiſe up and furniſh Inſtruments for every ſervice; and if at this time men think that by cutting off, and wearing out Saints and faithful Ones, their neſt is ſet on high, they ſhall be delivered from the power of evil, none remaining to cry out of their violence and ſpoyl, to detect the unrighteouſneſs of their wayes and doings, the very* ſtone ſhall cry out of the Wall, and the beam out of the Timber ſhall witneſs againſt them.

I humbly pray, and wiſh that the caſt-out, ſcattered, peeled people, in whoſe heart is the Fear of the Lord, under all amuſing diſpenſations, may yet increaſe in the Faith that ſtands in the Power of God, and is of the operation of his Spirit, in the exerciſe thereof, which judgeth not after appearances, they may underſtand all

theſe

these deaths, passing over persons and things, but needful and preparatory for the Glory that is to follow, when their filth and defilements by the Spirit of Judgment, and by the Spirit of Burning shall be put away; the slow progress of which work, with the discovery made of so great a defection from professed Light and Principles, ought greatly to be laid to heart, how many by reason thereof, turn from the Truth, and are confirmed in Athiesm, even by the deceitful working of those, who in the failure of outward advantages, and exposal to necessities, bonds, and death, set themselves at such a distance from the works of God, our eyes have seen (the begining of fulfilling Propheſies, Threatnings, and Promises to the last dayes) as if either there was no Holiness or Righteousness in them, or that they were unacquainted with the inward Life and Spirit of them, so deeply hath corruption & the spirit of the world mingled it self, with those, who not long since, in greatest seeming Light and Zeal, professed, to seek after a better state of things, Even looking for, and hastning to the new Heavens, and new Earth, wherein dwells Righteousness; *but the Works of God being forgotten, no wonder his Word is so little believed, or his counsel waited for.*

It was a worthy Expostulation, but a few years since, (before some then in the exercise of Authority) of one, who I fear hath out-lived the force of it, which though large, hoping it may be of use, I take leave here to transcribe; ‘ *If you will be able to* steer your Course ‘ a-right, *if you would take* one streight step, *have in a* ‘ *readiness an acquaintance with the work of God, what* ‘ *it is that he aims at, by which you may be guided in* ‘ *all your undertakings. Suppose now a* man *or* men ‘ *should come and ask of you, What God hath done in* ‘ *these Nations? What he hath wrought and effected?*

What is brought forth? Have you an answer in readiness? Certainly God hath done so much, as that he expects you should be able to give an account of it; take heed that every one of you be not ready to speak the disquietments of your own Spirits, and so cast contempt on the Work of God; *something else is required of you, I have sometimes in darkness and under temptations my self, begun to think, that what hath been, is the thing that is, and there is no new thing under the Sun; as it hath been among the Heathen of old, so it hath been amongst us; or as it was with* Israel, 1 *King.*16.21,22. Then were the people of *Israel* divided into two parts, half of the people followed *Tibni*, the son of *Ginath*, to make him King; and half followed *Omri*: but the people that followed *Omri*, prevailed against the people that followed *Tibni*, the son of *Ginath*; so *Tibni* died, and *Omri* reigned. *That a* common thing *and frequent in the World, had befaln us, wherein God had no hand, but that of common Providence, in dashing one sort of men against another*; *so* foolish *have I been*, *and as a Beast*, so ready to condemn the Generation of the Righteous; *so* unbelieving, *and ready to cast away the Faith and Prayer of ten thousand Saints, one of whose sighs shall not be lost*; *but* such fearful effects *sometimes, trouble, disquietment, disappointment, and carnal fear will produce. But certain it is, none of the many cryes of the people of God shall be lost, nor their Faith disappointed*; *God hath a peculiar design in hand, and we are to find it out, that we may be able to answer them that make enquiries. If you lay not this foundation of your* procedures, *I shall not wonder, if you err in your wayes*; *it is your* Pole-Star, *and will be so, by which your whole course is to be steered; your*

Shield,

'Shield, *which whilst it is safe, though you die, yet* 'your Glory abides. *And the same Author further dis-*cussing *what this Work and Design of the Lord was, re-*sults *it mainly in this,* 'That Godliness and the love 'of the Lord Jesus be preserved, protected, and secu-'red from a return of the hand of violence upon it.

What then may we now expect, but after a little further fluctuating upon the deep, to suffer shipwrack upon some Shelves or Rocks, seeing we have ceased our steerage by this Pole-Star? *what may we expect, but slaughter and extirpation, since that* Mighty Shield *is* vilely cast away, as though it had not been anointed with Oyl? *considering also, that if* the hand of violence be returned, *its confederated with, under the sacred ties of Oaths & Covenants, even whilst it manifestly opposes Godliness, and bends the edge of all its power against such as love the Lord Jesus in sincerity; I am sure it calls for deep lamentation, that a People, who had the Name of the Lord upon them, are left to that wonderful and horrible thing;* (Jer. 5. last.) Prophets propheſying falsely, and Princes bearing rule by their means, and both Prophets and People (through a little present fleshly ease and prosperity, waxing fat and shining) love to have it so; *the holy Spirit, then assures, the end will be bitter, and that enquiry, What will ye do, in the end thereof? though slightly passed over now, will have its resolve, by their cry to the Mountains and Rocks, to fall on, and hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the Throne, when in the faileur of justice on Earth, he will cause judgement to be heard from Heaven,* When he ariseth, *as certainly he will,* to judge the Cause of the Fatherless and Needy, and to save all the meek of the Earth.

But I may not further thus proceed, lest I exceed

bounds, nor is it needful that more be said of the Author, *only I am perswaded it greatly furthered him in the search after, & knowledge of divine mysteries, that he never was entangled, and disadvantaged by Academical Education, which hath been over-fruitful, in furnishing persons (as worthy Mr.* Rutherford *on another occasion in his Letters expresses it) with* ill washen and foul distinctions to shift Christ, *this age hath over-plentiful testimony thereof; this Servant of the Lord, as by the account left of himself, in the last two Pages of this Book, was by his believing Parents, otherwise nurtured, who waiting at the foot of Christ, keeping his precepts diligently, became wiser than his Teachers, giving occasion to many to renew that saying,* Whence hath this man letters? *for he was* eloquent and mighty in the Scriptures; *adding much to such as conversed with him, whether by word or Epistle.*

If what is here presented, prove of use to strengthen weak hands, or to uphold them that are ready to fall, by keeping in view the Resurrection and Blessedness prepared for those whom God guides by his Counsel, they will know where to give the glory.

I earnestly wish and pray, That those to whom in a peculiar manner he was sent, amongst whom more especially he laboured, who must give an account of so great a Talent and Price, long trusted with them, may do it with joy, discovering by an obedience of Faith, to the Lord Jesus under all tryals, that he laboured not in vain; and I hope, however it may be to others, what is here presented, may be useful to them, keeping in remembrance how holily, justly, and unblameably he behaved himself amongst them, that following his Faith, they may be saved from this Generation, and be found amongst those, who receive the End of their Faith, the Salvation of their Soul, *Amen.*

To the MEMORY of Mr. *Abraham Cheare.*

Anagram.

Ramah Baca here.

WAs there a *voice* in *Ramah* heard! *Jer.* 31. 15.
Was bitter weeping there?
'Cauſe *Rachels* children were not ſpar'd, *Mat.*2.18.
Why ſhould there not be *Here?*
Was *Baca* in time paſt a Well? *Pſal.* 84.6.
Although a place of drought,
Was it made ſo by *Iſrael?*
When journ'ing in the South.
Did th' one for Children thus lament?
The other for their Water,
Oh! how ſhould *Sion* it reſent, *Lam.*2.1, to
When God her Sons doth ſlaughter? 12.
When he cuts off her pleaſant ſtreams, *Pſal.*46.4.
Her beautious Branches wither; *Amos* 1. 2.
When he ſhuts up her brighteſt Beams, *Lam* 2.1.
Doth home his Jewels gather. *Mala.*3.17.
Yea, how ſhould this increaſe her cry, *Jonah* 3.8.
When in a time of need; *Pſ.*119.126
That Shepherds, they ſhould multiply, *Mat.* 9. 38.
The ſlaughter'd Flocks to feed; *Zech.*11.4,7
That even then, God ſhould not ſpare,
To take hence in great numbers; *Iſa.*57.1.
The moſt laborious in their Spheare: *Ezek.*3.26.
Place this among his Wonders. *Job* 37. 23.

Thy

*Pſal.*36.6. They wayes, O God, are in the deep,
Job 11. 7. To ſearch them to perfection;
1 *Cor.*2.9. 'Tis not for Mortals pace to keep
*Pſal.*32.8. With thee, give thou direction.
*Pſal.*73 24. Let's ponder well thy wayes, O Lord,
Job 36.9,10 Give us thy hearing Ear;
Some teachings to us do afford,
*Deut.*13.11 By what we ſee; let's fear,
*Ezek.*12.3. What this portends, thou mak'ſt ſuch
Mal. 3.17. To treaſure up each Jewel; (haſte,
*Ezek.*14.16 Art minded, Lord, our Land to waſte,
*Mala.*3.1. Muſt we for wrath, be fewel!
*Jer.*12.1. If ſo 't ſhould be, thou wouldſt be juſt,
Ezra 9. 13. 'Twere but Sin's recompence:
Lam 3. 29. We muſt our mouths put in the duſt,
2 *Sam.*24.17 We have giv'n great offence.
Joel 2. 17. Yet ſpare, O Lord, ſpare thou our Land,
*Ezek.*9.4. At leaſt in it thy Mourners;
*Pſal.*85.10. Thy Mercy will with Juſtice ſtand,
*Jer.*14. 7. In pard'ning great offenders.
Job 19. 21. Make us the objects of thy pitty,
*Gen.*19.19. Thy Mercy magnifie;
Jonah 3.10. Spare as of old, an Heathen City,
*Pſal.*11.17. Spare, O ſpare, let's not die.
*Zech.*13. 7. But if more Shepherds thou wilt ſmite,
*Lam.*1. 15. And Mighty men muſt fall;
*Iſa.*40.11. Feed Sheep thy ſelf, thy Battels fight,
1 *Sam.* .8. Be thou in ſtead of all.
2 *Cor.*12.9. *Amen. Amen.*

Another.

Another.

To the Memory of Mr. *ABRAHAM CHEARE.*

Anagram.

Ah me! Rear Bacha.

WHo can but Mourn, when men do ſcorn!
To Note the Righteous Death; *Iſa.57.1.*
Who can but *Rear* a *Bacha* here, *Pſal.84.6.*
When ſuch drop off the Earth?
When Circumſtance, ſhall Evidence,
In Judgement it may be:
Slight it who can, make me the man,
O Lord, may cry, *Ah me!*

Amen.

To

To the Memory of Mr. ABRAHAM CHEARE.

An Acroſtick.

A rt gone Dear Soul! Art fled? Haſt left the Earth?
B elow thee 'twas: it anſwered not thy Birth.
R are was thy Life; choice was thy latter end,
A t laſt for God, and Truth, thou didſt contend.
H aſt Overcome? Haſt got the Victory?
A h! then, let others ſay, Why may not I?
M ercy Begate him, Led him, Fed him, Kept,

C hear'd him, did all, until the time he ſlept.
H ath now enthron'd him, enter'd him in Reſt,
E ach Soul that walks with God, ſhall thus be bleſt.
A wake, then, Rouze faint hearts, ſhake off diſtruſt,
R ampant be Faith, greateſt of men are duſt;
E 'relaſting 's God, and Worſhip him we muſt.

ANAGRAM.

Abraham Cheare.

Ah Arme a Breach.

TO Saints and Sinners, God this day doth call,
To hear, conſider, and to lay to heart,
What he hath done, is doing, and yet ſhall
Be done amongſt us, ere this Cup depart.
Bleſſed are they, whom Chaſt'ning he doth teach,
To hear and fear, when he makes ſuch *a Breach.*

O haſten Saints, how is the Sun now ſetting,
The Light which on you ſometimes brightly ſhone,
Away from you apace ſeems to be getting;
As if God's work amongſt you now were done.
By treble ſtroaks God heretofore did Preach,
To you, not hearing, comes this fearful *Breach.*

And is there not a Cauſe? Conſider, try;
What mean thoſe bleatings everywhere ſo rife?
A worldly Spirit, Pride, Formality,
Bent to back-ſliding, as if 'twere your life.
Firſt-Love, firſt-Works, alas, you do not reach,
No wonder then the Lord makes ſuch *a Breach.*

Sayes to his chiefeſt Children, Come away,
Remove the Candle, and put out the Light:
Theſe People eat and drink, riſe up to play,
Are not the Children of the Day, but Night;
They hear indeed, but do not what I Teach,
Wherefore in fury, I will make *a Breach.*

Poor

Poor Church in *Plymouth*, whom methinks I spy,
As men astonied stand, and thus they speak,
The Lord hath dealt with us most bitterly,
Dear *Cheare*'s gone from us, O behold *a Breach!*

'Tis so indeed, *a breach* full sore and wide,
That is upon the choicest Mercies made;
And each of you, are like now to be try'd,
Whether Religion be your chiefest Trade
That you are driving Heaven for to reach,
Or fixt on Earth, if so, a sorer *Breach*

Will yet attend you, fully to discover
Upon what ground you stand, what ends you have
Before this over-flowing Scourge pass over;
Look well about you, *Cheare*'s gone to his Grave.
The Shepherd's smitten, he no more must Preach,
Watch, Warn, nor Water; Oh! this is *a Breach.*

Ah! *Plymouth*, thou thy Shepherds that hast turn'd
Out of thy Gates, the men who sought thy good;
Against them cruelly thy wrath hath burn'd,
Thou suckst in poyson, loatheſt wholsome food.
Hughs, *Martin*, *Cheare*, & all thy hand could reach,
Thou castest out, wherefore behold *a Breach.*

And you poor Sinners, living in that place,
Where God set up, this burning shining Light,
And did display the Glory of his Grace,
Thereby your Souls to Christ for to invite;
Your Day is gone, your Night its shadows reach,
Instead of Building, now behold *a Breach.*

A sound

A ſound of Goſpel-Grace, you may not hear
Again, till God have made your Souls to ſay,
Bleſt are thoſe feet, on Mountains that appear,
Bringing glad tydings of the joyful day:
Who coming in the Name of Chriſt, ſhall Preach,
And thereby ſhall repair this woful *Breach*.

Poor outward, inward Priſoners, and Exiles,
Have loſt a worthy ſympathizing Friend;
So hath whole *Sion*, within many miles,
She hath not any, ſo able to extend.
Help every way: Compaſſions he did reach,
And laboured, till he died, in *Sion*'s *Breach*.

The day before he di'd, when ſpeech ſeem'd failing,
His Soul did travel, groan, and cry to God
Moſt bitterly, lamenting and bewayling;
Cauſes in *Sion* calling for the Rod:
The deep Apprehenſies his Soul did reach,
And while he liv'd, made on him many *a Breach*.

But, Ah! the day is great 'mong *Jacob*'s Seed,
Horſemen and Chariots ſwiftly flee away;
And none are rais'd to ſtand up in their ſtead,
When each choice piece, goes to its Houſe of Clay.
By whom ſhall *Jacob* riſe? Lord, ſhou us teach,
And ſend Supplies ſufficient to the *Breach*.

Which cannot be, but by thy holy Spirit,
Giv'n forth amongſt the Remnant that remain;
Who, till then, Places deſolate inherit,
As men to be made free among the ſlain:
Without this, who can Suffer, Do, or Preach,
Or ſtand this day in ſuch a widened *Breach*.

Look

Look up then, *Sion*'s Friends, from things below,
To Jesus, who was dead, and is alive;
And hath in heart and hand for to bestow,
All that we need, to make poor *Sion* thrive.
Though men of Might be gone, Hee's all to each,
Yea, more than all, to repair such *a Breach*.

He shall not be discouraged, nor fail,
Till all in purpose, purchase, Promise true;
Be brought to pass, also both head and tayl,
Of Beast and Whore, receive their final due.
And Kings and Kingdoms out their hands shall reach
Submissively to Him that heals the *Breach*.

ERRATA.

PAg. 8. line 24. *for* manifect, r. manifest. p. 20. l. 4. *for* or, r. of, p. 37. l. 18. *for* promises, r. premisses. p. 59. l. 29. *for* salutations r. salvations, p. 73. l. 27. *for* and, r. as. p. 82. l. 31. *for* came, r. come. p. 93. l. 1. *for* promises, r. premises. p. 112. l. 26. for promises, r. prophesies. p. 114. l. 1. r. largeness. p. 120. l. 1. *for* affait, r. affaire. p. 125 l. 1. *for* do ingage, r. to. p. 203. l. 32 *for* Admo. r. Admi. p. 228. l. 13. *f* you r. your, p. 245. l. 33. r. liregiving. p. 279. l. 30. *f*. to, r. too.

There are also several mis-pointings, which the Judicious Reader will of himself amend.

FAITHS CONQUEST OVER THE TORTURES & TENDERS OF An Hour of Temptation.

Heb. 11. 35. latter part.

By Faith ——

——*And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.*

THis Chapter, in the main ſcope of it, is deſigned, to ſet forth the Incomparable Excellency of *Faith*, commending it ſelf in the Example and Inſtance of many Worthies, as anſwering to that deſcription the Lord himſelf gives of it, *Mark* 9. 23. *All things are poſſible to him that believeth*; the which Catalogue and Regiſter of their Acts and Monuments is not intended meerly to preſerve the memory of ſuch men (though their remembrance is bleſſed, *Prov.* 10. 7. *Pſal.* 112. 6.) but mainly to recommend to the Saints and Ages to come, the mighty Power of that Principle, by vertue of which they believed things incredible, attempted things impoſſible,

possible, sustained things insufferable in the eye of sence and reason; nothing therefore low or mean is attributed in this place, nor should our aims or expectation be flat and indifferent in the contemplation thereof.

It's most true, this History of the famous acts of Beleevers, is drawn out of the Old Testament, and calculated (as I may so express it) to that meridian, *These all died in faith, obtaining a good report, but received not the Promise*, vers. 13. & 39. yet serveth not only indifferently for the Gospel-dayes wherein we are, but indeed commends it self the more transcendently to us, by how much God hath provided some better things for us; having opened more fully the object of believing *the Lord Jesus in the Gospel*, and poured out more plentifully the holy Spirit of *Promise*, than it was ordinarily in those dayes: which Consideration may serve to afford both mighty Aid and Argument to Believers now, to encourage Christians to trust upon the Lord, to do for them more than they can ask or think, according to the power which worketh in them, in their faithful following him.

Not to stand upon the opening particularly of these words, nor on the exact time when they were fulfilled; very likely this, and some other here about had reference to the cruel sufferings in the times of the *Maccabees*, which the *Hebrews*, to whom this Epistle was written, had reason to have a particular knowledge of, although the History to us be *Apocrypha*; it may suffice us, that the Spirit of the Lord hath here infallibly determined, such things were done, and that the Conquest was truly attributable to this believing, as it dealt with, and drew

drew vertue from the power of God. So that without more a-do, in the words are *Four* things observeable;

1. Here is the Noble and Glorious Principle in which all these rare exploits are wrought; on the commendation of which, the whole Chapter insisteth. *By Faith* they did it; whether in all the subject mentioned, it was a Faith that was saving, will not be here disputed; this is plain, it was such Faith at least, as falls within the *Word of God*, and builds upon the Authority thereof, in the business they were concerned in; upon which foundation they went through, and under-went what was before them, in following God in their generations.

2. We have here the subject, or seat of action, upon which this great Experiment is tryed; and that is a tortured, butchered, massacred, harmless, weak Believer; *Others were Tortured*, a particular Inventory whereof made and taken in the verses following, 36, 37, 38. such cruel usages as were beneath humanity to inflict, and above humanity to sustain, were exercised on, and invincibly endured by these poor souls, under the aid and influence of that Faith of theirs.

3. Here is the magnanimity and excellency of spirit described, unto which their faith raised them, putting its self in the noble denyal & repulse given to the tender of deliverance, upon any unworthy terms; *They Accepted not Deliverance*, though their Persecuters came with torments in one hand, and tenders in the other, in as much as both were manifest Artifices and Engines to accomplish the same design: as they slighted the threatnings of the one, so they scorned the allurements of the other. De-

ſiverance in it ſelf, and as it may be conſidered, is a mercy; and the acceptance of it is a duty; and conſequently the refuſal of it would have been their evil. But if Deliverance cannot be had but upon terms diſhonorable to the Lord; if deliverance be a ſnare, then to accept of ſuch deliverance is a ſin, at leaſt a great blemiſh to beleeving; of which more hereafter.

4. We have the powerful Motive, and bleſſed Proſpect that Faith took in view, from whence ſtrength was gathered to bear the tortures, and forbear the deliverance, and that was, *The obtaining a better Reſurrection*; they had their eye and heart ſet upon a way of deliverance, for which they would be beholding to the Lord only, and this is called, *A better Reſurrection*; that is, not only better than their tortures, but better alſo than any deliverance that could be offer'd to them: this fixed expectation of their Faith carried them above any baſe or unworthy cringings to the ſons of violence.

If you conſider the words in their Connexion and dependancy on the former part of the verſe, you have this obſervable; Women received their dead (Children) returned to life again; this was verified, 1 *King.* 17. 23. 2 *King.* 4. 36. Others (*viz.* other Women) were tortured (i.e) had their living children tortured, not accepting deliverance for them; this is ſtoried 2 *Maccab.* 6. If we conſider Women as the ſubjects of this ſtrong Faith, who are ſtiled, 1 *Pet.* 3. 7. the weaker veſſels; Widows (perhaps) and deſolate, yet truſting in God, hardly any faith out-went theirs: *Oh Woman, Great is thy Faith:* we might by the way gather this Obſervation:

That

☞ *That the weaker veſſels may be capable of exerciſing the ſtrongeſt Faith.*

Out of weakneſs they were made ſtrong: *when I am weak, then I am ſtrong*; this treaſure (as well as the diſcoveries of the Goſpel) is put into earthen-veſſels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us; that as the ſtrength of Fleſh may not glory in his preſence, ſo neither may the weakneſs of a poor Saint occaſion him to ſink or diſpond, but he that glorieth may glory only in the Lord. — But I ſhall not ſtand here, but proceed to draw forth, and make a brief improvement of ſome of the Obſervations that lie moſt plain in the words themſelves: one of which is plainly thus;

Doct. 1. That the moſt cruel tortures that have been invented by the vileſt ſons of men, have (by divine permiſſion) been vented upon the choiceſt ſons of God. They *of whom*, in Gods accompt, *the world was not worthy*, the beſt of earth was not good enough for them, *verſ.* 38. in mans accompt, the worſt of earth was not bad enough: As *they are made the filth of the world, and off-ſcouring of all things*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 13. ſo no inſtruments of cruelty can be enough vile or forcible in their thoughts to rid and deliver it of them. The luſt and rage in all generations hath been fruitful in inventions of this kind; *they were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder*, &c. the innumerable variety of particulars are reducible to this general, *They where Tortured*. I ſhall only attempt to purſue this Point to an iſſue, by ſpeaking briefly to theſe two enquiries, 1. What is meant by theſe *Tortures*. 2. Whence hath it ſprung that they (ſuch an harmleſs People as they) have had

this for their *lot*, or *why* have they been *tortured* thus?

As for the former thus, The word here rendered *torture*, is observed no where else to be used in the New-Testament, and in strictness of speech signifieth, to be used and dealt withal, as men do with a Drum, *viz.* τυμπανί ζομαι à nomine τύμπανον: which figurative expression directs us for its meaning, either to the *manner* or *end* of mens cruel dealing with them. If the former be lookt on as intended, then the resemblance is taken from the manner of their *torments*, answering either to the violent stretching out, or distending the head of the Drum, which (you know) by cords and other means is braced at times to the utmost extremity. Thus have the precious limbs and members, not only of our Lord himself, but of his dearest children, been violently distorted, till part hath been plucked from part on Racks or other Engins, and that complaint litterally verified, *Psal.*22.14. *I am poured out like water, all my bones are out of joynt.* — Or else it answers to the beating of a drum, which is performed with both hands, with multiplicity of stroaks not to be numbred; and then it referreth to those cruel beatings, stripes, and blows that have been beyond measure laid upon their backs, such as of which the Apostle speaks, *Some had tryal of cruel mockings and scourgings.* *Paul* records the number and measure of his beatings by the *Jews*, 2 *Cor.* 11.24. as though they would keep stroke as on a Drum: such pretended order is sometimes spoken of by such Revolters as are profound to make slaughter, *Hos.*5.2. but at other times they were stripes without measure, *vers.*23,25. beating with rods, beating with stones;

ſtones; hence he *was in deaths oft*, in this path muſt we expect to follow our Lord, 2 *Cor.*6.4,5. *in ſtripes in impriſonment, &c.* This ſets forth the liberal and unlimitted cruelty in point of act that wicked men have ſtill abounded in.

Or otherwiſe, the metaphor directs us to the conſideration of the *end* and *deſign* of the *Perſecutors* in the extention of their cruelty, and this alſo under this ſimilitude, may refer one of theſe two wayes: Firſt, to ſet out the *deſign* of the *Tormentors* (as is the Souldiers in beating their Drum) thereby to animate, encourage, and hearten thoſe that are engaged with themſelves; that look as that warlike-ſound is intended to quicken, chear-up, and delight the ſpirits of ſuch Warriors; ſo are the extorted groans and cryes of the Lords poor ſufferers, levelled to the heightning the pride, ſcorn, and deriſion of a bloudy generation. So they did by the green-tree (our Lord himſelf) ſee *Matt.* 27. 39. to 49. where you have the People, Prieſt, Theeves, making paſtime of his groans under the torments of men without, and the bruiſings of his God within, *Iſa.*53.10. this was prophetically declared of him, and verified in his members. *Pſal.* 69. 10, 11, 12. Nevertheleſs, the over-ruling hand of the Lord is in this frequently to be ſeen and magnified, in turning the devices of the wicked herein upon their own head, and rather working conviction and aſtoniſhment on many, who perhaps have come with intentions to ſcorn at the miſery of the poor Lambs of Chriſt, yet in beholding the inhumane cruelty of the one, and the divine Power diſplayed in upholding the other, have gone away convinced, *God is with them of a truth*; as its manifeſt in the ſequel

of that deriſion on our Lord above mentioned, *Luk.*23.47,48. The Centurion ſeeing the iſſue of it, glorified God, juſtified Chriſt, and all the people ſmote their breaſts and returned; ſo ſhall he make their own tongues to fall upon themſelves, all that ſee them ſhall flee away, and all men ſhall fear, and ſhall declare the work of God, when they ſhal wiſely conſider of his doings, *Pſal.*64.8,9. (2) Another *end* and *deſign* of men by ſuch torments, is to ſtrike greater terror in the hearts of their oppoſits, to break the ſpirits of ſuch as are related to and intereſted in the cauſe of thoſe tortured ones, being Companions of them that are ſo uſed, and thereby to drive them from their ſtation and profeſſion, ſmiting the ſhepherd, in expectation that then the ſheep muſt be ſcattered; but herein (as in the former) infinite Wiſdom ſhines forth, in bringing *meat out of the Eater*, and *ſweetneſs out of the Strong*, bringing to nought the devices of the wicked, it frequently coming to paſs, as in the caſe of *Paul*, *Phil.* 1. 12, 13, 14. The things (the cruel things) which happened to him, fell out rather for the furtherance of the Goſpel, ſo that his bonds for Chriſt were manifeſt in all *Ceſars* Court, and all other places, and many Brethren in the Lord waxing confident by his bonds, grew much more bold to ſpeak the Word without fear. *O Lord, behold their Threatnings, and grant to thy Servants Boldneſs*, was the Prayer of their Faith, *Acts* 4. 29. The more ſhamefully the Apoſtles were intreated, they were the more bold in their God, to Preach the Goſpel of their God with much contention, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 2. Men think it for evil, but God hath wonderfully brought it about for good.

Theſe

These Tortures upon the harmless Lambs of Christ, have been exercised in several Ages of the world with much variety, according to the fruitful womb of lust of the sons of violence, who from generation to generation derive and suck the spirit of Persecution from him that was of the wicked-one, and slew his Brother; and hath more or less, exerted its self according to the opportunities they have had for so doing, which have been frequently either more relaxed, or restrained, as hath seemed best to infinite Wisdom to bring about his ends and designs of Glory in the earth. But though these great and sore tryals are the common lot of Saints in all ages, yet there are some eminent and peculiar Periods, some remarkable points of time, which the Scripture doth refer unto, that may be called in an especial manner *the times of such torment*, with which we have need be well acquainted, and our concernment respecting them.

The First time that I note such tortures were in date and fashion (as I may express it) is that (as I understand) the Text points at, namely, toward the latter end of the *Grecian Monarchy*; not but that divers fair Sons and Daughters of God, had their share deeply in Sufferings before, sundry times. But now it grew to be the common expectation of all those that would hold up any Profession of the true *God*, a time was come over them, which carried this in the very front of it; it was a torturing time, especially under *Antiochus Epiphanes*, of whom we have such an exact description, under the notion of a little Horn, the very point and venom of which, is levelled against the people of the Saints of the most High; reade him pourtrayed, *Dan.* 8. *vers.*

verſ. 9.10,11,12. compared with, and opened *v.* 21, 23,24,25. This dreadful oppoſition and perſecution was made to the *Name of God* againſt ſuch as retained the Profeſſion of it, according to the Laws and Ordinances given by the hand of *Moſes*.

There is a Second Period, or ſpecial point of time wherein the tortures of the Lords people are remarked, and that is under the reign and rage of the Dragon, exerciſing his power in the Roman Monarchy conſidered as Pagan; this is deſcribed by that fourth Beaſt, *Dan.* 7.7,8. dreadful and terrible, and *verſ.* 19,20. exceeding dreadful; this principally reſpects thoſe incredible tortures that were inflicted throughout the whole Roman Territories (which were wide and large) upon any who profeſſed the *Name of Chriſt*, eſpecially in the Reigns of thoſe *Ten bloody Emperors*, known commonly by the name of the *Ten Perſecutions*: As the former was againſt profeſſion of the *Name of God* under the Old-Teſtament; ſo this was againſt the profeſſion of the *Name of Chriſt* under the New.

A Third time to which, by way of eminency, the Tortures of the Lords people is appropriated, is the time of the Reign, and eſpecially towards the Ruine of *Antichriſt*, deſcribed in *Rev.* 13. in its diſtinct Powers under the firſt and ſecond Beaſt, beginning ſhort upon the Empires profeſſing the *Name of Chriſt*, & carrying threatnings and ſlaughters againſt the true Witneſſes of the Spirit & Life of Chriſt, though pretending to the Name of him; and this not only during the 1260 dayes or years aſſigned him, but principally at the end thereof, when for a ſhort ſpace Power muſt be given him to ſlay thoſe Witneſſes with ſuch a ſlaughter, as carrieth

sieth its manifest distinction from the Sufferings to which they are lyable, during their propheſying in Sackcloth and his bloody Reign, not far from which, finiſhing Rage (which is but a ſhort time) the general Conſent of moſt that ſearch into the times, and what *Iſrael* ought to do, agreeth that we are by the wiſe hand of our Father caſt, the Word and Works, Prophecies and Providences of God, helping much to make up ſuch a Judgment, though in ſeveral particulars about it, there is variety in the underſtandings of the moſt ſerious enquirers. My apprehenſion and expectation hereupon, is, that we are near upon the borders of (if we have not already made ſome entrance on) an hour of ſore temptation, which will try all them that (profeſſing an intereſt in heaven) do dwell upon earth; in which it will be found of great moment that we ſtand girt about with the whole Armour of Righteouſneſs upon the right hand, & on the left, eſpecially holding faſt this ſhield of Faith, whereby, though in the Ages paſt ſome were tortured, yet they were more then Conquerors, they over-come by the blood of the Lamb, &c. Our Second Enquiry in opening the Obſervation, was, Whence comes it to paſs, that ſuch a people as the Lords people are (at leaſt wiſe ought to be) are nevertheleſs expoſed to ſuch torments, they who are the bleſſing to the whole Creation, ſimple concerning evil, willing to live honeſtly, following peace with all men, as much as it is poſſible, ſent forth as ſheep in the midſt of wolves, blameleſs and harmleſs as the ſons of God without rebuke, profeſſing and ſtriving to anſwer this principle, yet are hated, caſt out, perſecuted as the filth of the World, the troublers of *Iſrael*,

them

them that turn the world up-side down; whence cometh this to pass, *That no torture can be heavy enough, no death hard enough for them.*

1. That which gives life and fierceness to all these Enmities and Tortures which spring from them, is the beastly Nature and Lust of poor fallen man, that bears the Image of the Devil herein, having this Character, *Hateful, and hating one another, living in malice and envy*, Tit. 3. 3. *serving divers lusts and pleasures.* Hence wicked men, and they that have no Faith, are called *unreasonable men*, 2 *Thess.* 3. 2. [ἄτοποι] men that cannot be reduced to any proper place; *Beasts after the manner of men*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 32. Bruits hurried with humour or sense contrary to reason; as natural wilde Beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, 2 *Pet.* 2. 12. How frequently are they likened by the Spirit to Lions, *Psal.* 57. 4. Wolves of the evening, *Zeph.* 3. 3. and other Beasts of prey; signifying the miserable plight sin hath cast poor man into. If *Jacobs* own sons, having partook of his education, deserved this Character, *Cursed be their Wroth for it was fierce, and their Rage for it was cruel*; How much less is to be expected from others, that have no bridle on them, if their lust be crossed, if their wickedness be witnessed against, as it is by the holy Conversation of testifying Saints? Who can stand before envy! the Ambition of one *Haman* will run down a whole Nation; the fear and anger of one *Herod* will devour all the Children in *Bethelem.*

2. There is a set and stated Enmity put, and placed between these two Seeds, the Seed of the Woman, and the Seed of the Serpent, *Gen.* 3. 15. upon which a War is founded in a way that can admit

admit of no reconciliation: for what agreement can there be betwixt Light and Darkneſs? 1 *Cor.*6. 14, 15, 16. Hence the Lord takes notice, that the bottom of that perpetual diſcord, by which the *Philiſtines* dealt with *Iſrael* by revenge, and took vengeance with a diſpightful heart to deſtroy it, was the old hatred, *Ezek.*23.15. an hatred that was as old as the old Serpent the Devil, *who was a murderer from the beginning*. Hence 1 *Joh.*3.12. *Cain* is ſaid to ſlay his Brother, he was of that wicked one; and the occaſion of the quarrel was, his own Works were evil, and the others righteous: This Root Chriſt reduceth that wrath unto, that was exerciſed againſt him, *John* 8. 44. *Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the works of your Father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth.* And as it was in *Abrahams* Family, *He that was born after the Fleſh, perſecuted him that was born after the Spirit*. So it was in *Paul's* dayes, *Gal.* 4. 29. So it is now, and ſo it will be till the God of Peace tread Satan under our feet, which will be ſhortly, *Rom.* 16. 20. till that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, *be bound and caſt into the bottomleſs pit*, Rev.20. beginning.

3. There is an exaſperation and aggravation added to this old hatred, frequently, when there is added a blind Superſtitious Devotion and Zeal; When this old hatred can get the covert and pretext of a Zeal for God, it growes hereby exceeding fierce; when *Paul* was acted on a principle of ſelf-righteouſneſs, out of zeal he perſecuted the Church, *Phil.*3.7. and you ſee to what height it grew, he thought he ought to do any thing contrary to the Name of Chriſt, ſhut them up in priſon, voted

their

their death, punished them, compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceeding mad against them, persecuted them even to strange Cities, *Acts* 26.9, 10, 11. breathed out threatnings and slaughters against them, *chap.*9.1. Of this time Christ foretells and forwarns his Disciples, *The time cometh that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service*, Joh.16.2. They who think it promotes divine service to persecute Saints, being zealous of a traditional Worship of their Fathers, will be very cruel in their undertakings; Hence is the Spirit so expres, *that in the latter dayes perilous* (or fierce) *times shall come, for men shall have* (among other ingredients to their maglignity) *a form of Godlineß, but denying the power thereof*, 2 Tim. 3.1. to 4. This, when it comes to be the guise of Persecutors, will make of it fierce times; When *Simeon* and *Levi* had a Religious Pretext for their cruel act, *Gen.* 34. 31. *Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel*, Gen.49.7.

4. Another occasion of their wrath boyling up to torment, ariseth from the constant, bold, and couragious Spirit that is sometimes found in the Lord's people, that will neither be debauched with their terms, nor broken by their threats; this exasperats exceedingly. So it is with the three Worthies, *Dan.*3.16,18,19. *We are not careful to answer thee in this matter; be it known to thee, O King, we will not serve thy Gods, nor Worship thy golden Image which thou hast set up. Then was the King full of fury, and the form of his visage changed against them, and commanded the Furnace to be heated seven times more than it was wont*, &c. See also *vers.*22.

When *Steven* stood in the boldnes of his Testi-

mony,

mony, *Acts* 7. 54, 57. *It cut them to the heart, they gnashed on him with their teeth, cryed out, stopt their ears, ran upon him with one accord, cast him out of the City, and stoned him.* If *Mordecai* will not bow, *Haman* is on a rack, all his comforts do not comfort him, till he shew himself profound for slaughter; not an ordinary gallows will serve the turn. A Consideration which ought not to be improved, as many do, that because they are apt to be thus enraged, therefore we are to slack our Testimony, thereby to abate their fury, but rather to wait on the Lord with the more earnestness to double and multiply his Spirit, and the strengths and consolations of it with us, as they *Acts* 4. 29. *Though the Heathen rage, &c. Now, Lord, behold their threatnings, and grant to thy Servants that with all boldness they may speak thy Word.* They do not beg Prudence, Policy, Skill to evade and escape, but more anointing, to testifie boldly for the Lord: which was granted fully.

5. When unto all this there is super-added the opportunity of wicked men's having the power of Magistracy in their hands, *Prov.* 28. 15, 16. I mind, when they have a providential admittance to the capacity of making Laws, and putting them in execution against the people of God, having their own lusts uncontroulable, and an advantage of covering their cruelty under pretext of Law, and to asperse the faithfulness of Saints to the Laws of Jesus Christ, with the odious charges of being against Magistracy, and not being subject to the higher Powers, &c. the old accusation, *Neh.* 2. 19. *ch.* 6. 6. *Hest.* 3. 8. *Acts* 17. 6, 7. They now rush upon the poor Lambs of Christ with all their lusts (as so many

ny sayls) bearing, nay, in these capacities there is occasion to draw forth those monstrous cruelties which (perhaps) they hardly thought were hid in their hearts; as you see in that remarkable instance of *Hazael*, who when he was told, *He would slay the young men of* Israel *with the sword, dash the Children, and rip up the Women with child?* replied, *But what is thy servant a Dog, that he should do this great thing?* He thought (its likely) that unless he did degenerate from humanity, and became a beast, he could not perform such strange things: but what is the answer of the Prophet, *The Lord hath shewed me, thou shalt be King over* Syria, 2 *King.* 8. 18. Intimating, that whatever fierce and dogged disposition lay hid in his heart against the Lords interest, under what plausible pretext soever it might be covered for a time from others, nay, whatever better perswasions he might have of himself about it, yet his *King-ship* would give opportunity and provocation enough to draw them forth, to grow up into his conceipt, *Joh.* 19. 10. *Knowest thou not that I have power to crucifie thee, and power to release thee?* will give strong temptation to a wicked man to condemn and kill the Just though he doth not resist, especially when an interest of worldly honour seems to lie that way, *ver.* 12. notwithstanding convictions and reluctancies of Conscience to the contrary, *Dan.* 6. 14, 15, 16. *Mat.* 14. 7, 9.

These may serve as some of the *Reasons*, giving light *why* and *whence* it is, that it hath been the lot of Saints some have been tortured thus. I shall only touch a little Practical Improvement, by drawing these Inferences,

The 1.

Use 1. If it be ſo that the Lord's people have their times by the permiſſion, nay the appointment of God, wherein they have been, and may be *tortured*, put to the moſt violent ſhameful way of dying; or the moſt ſlaviſh, miſerable, and diſgraceful way of living, though the moſt choice of all his Children, It then may ſerve to caution ſuch as are lookers on, how they proceed to make a poſitive judgement of men, and things, according to the ſevere diſpenſations they are carried through, a miſtake, upon which very great inconveniencies have often followed, and yet very incident in our Cenſuring-day to divers who deal with the Lord's Intereſt in their concluſions; as the *Barbarians* with that providence of the Viper on *Paul's* hand, paſs a judgment, *Without doubt this man is a murderer, whom though he eſcaped the Sea, yet vengeance ſuffereth not to live.* But ſuch raſh concluſions frequently revert as much into the quite contrary extream (as it did with them, *Acts* 28.4,5,6.) It becomes us therefore to lay our concluſions of this kind upon other principles than theſe, which are not appointed directly to ſignifie what we are apt often to infer from them ſingly conſidered, *Eccleſ.*9.1. if the beſt of men have endured the worſt of torments, if from the beginning it hath been ſo? ſuch *fiery tryals* ſhould be no ſtrange things to us, nor ſhould we draw any ſtrange deductions from it, either to the cenſure of the perſons, or diſlike of the cauſe teſtified to thereby.

Use 2. If the rage of man, having all the aggravations and advantages above-named, be ſuch a fierce thing, and hath been ſo fruitful in torments on the Saints; and if we have ſuch caution to ex-

pect more in the latter days, wherein iniquity must be expected to abound, then let it teach us to admire the wonderful grace of God to poor *England*, and to the poor Saints of God in it, that have lived in such times wherein men that hate them have such Laws in hand, and at hand, to destroy them; nay, having it in the power of their hand to put them in execution, having also received such exasperation in the years that are past to remember and revenge many old grudges, and yet so few to this day (compared with the body of professing people in this Nation) have suffered these things in their extremity: that we should be helped to cleave to the Lord, and every one of us alive before him, That there is no more blood mingled with our sacrifices: the Bush burn in the fire and yet not be consumed; it is the Lord's doings, and marvellous in our eyes, and should be owned and improved as an argument to strengthen our faith against the many *faintings* we are lyable unto, in further *tryals*.

Use 3. If from the Spirit that is in poor fallen man, there be such ill fruits as those mentioned against the image, people, and heritage of the Lord, let us not only prize that grace wch hath delivered us from that power, principle, and interest to which all the former fierce Characters do naturally and necessarily agree: But on the other hand, be very conversant with the Lord, for subduing in us the remains of that spirit that lusteth unto envy even in us; and that towards them that persecute us, there may be shewed forth our Dove-like innocency, in pressing toward that Gospel-qualification of praying for them, *Mat.* 5.44.45. *Rom.* 12.17. to the end, 1 *Pet.* 3.9. and doing them good for all the evil they

they do to us, that we may shew our selves to be the Children of another Father, living in another principle, and referring our selves in all the injuries done unto us, to another judgment; and if the Lord will bless it to that end, we may hereby leave a powerful conviction, that they hate and persecute us (as they did our Lord before us) without a cause.

I proceed to take some other Observations from the words, *Others were tortured*; Some were tryed otherwayes, others this way; some were tortured, not all; all are exercised some way or other, every man's work must be tryed. *Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution*, 2 Tim. 3. 12. *He chasteneth every son whom he receiveth*, Heb. 12. 6. *Whomsoever he loves, he rebukes and chasteneth*, Rev. 3. 19. But though every man must be tryed, it is not appointed that they must all be this way tryed; tryed by fire and water, tryed by tortures. *Some were tortured*; where I note.

Doct. 2. *That though the Lord hath provided tryals for all his Children, yet he hath designed tortures but to some of them.* Thus Christ expresseth himself to his Disciples, Some *of you they shall put to death*, Luk. 21. 16. *The Devil shall cast* some *of you into prison*, Rev. 2. 10. All Saints are *some* way tryed, they be but *some* Saints are alwayes tryed; *All men are born to sorrows*, Job 5. 7. yet but of *some* it is properly said, *they are men of sorrows*, Isa. 53. 3. *Lam.* 3. 1. *Psal.* 88. 15. This is a plain case and obvious to frequent experience. Yet because it may be seasonable and useful, we may consider it by inquiring into these Two Things.

1. *Why* some *are Tortured.*
2. *Why but* some *are Tortured.*

For the former: We now reſpect tortures as they are more immediately under the diſpoſal and ordering of the Lord, appointing more or leſs in point or meaſure, to more or fewer ſubjects as it pleaſeth him; they being ſuch bitter things as afore is deſcribed, it is enquired, *Why the Father appoints it to any of his Children?* To this is anſwered,

1. Negatively, not from any love God hath to the Torments, or from any lack or abatement of love to his Children, he doth not take pleaſure to ſee his precious believing People lie ſcattered up and down (as they are deſcribed *Pſal.* 141.7. & 79.2,3. *Lam.*4.1,2.) as ſo many marks and monuments of the cruelty and butchery of the ſons of men: no, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.*116.15. *Precious in the ſight of the Lord is the death of his Saints*; he eſteems them precious in their lives, and puts a value on them in their death. It goes (as we may ſpeak with reverence) near the heart of the Lord to ſee his Jewels thus dealt withal; *In all their Afflictions he is afflicted, and the Angel of his Preſence is with them*, Iſa.63.9. *He that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye*, Zech.2.8. *He doth not afflict willingly, or grieve the children of men*, Lam. 3.33. much leſs the Children of God, but rather *like as a father pitieth his children, ſo the Lord pittieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame, and conſidereth that we are but duſt*, Pſal.103.13,14. nay, he hath teſtified the greateſt diſpleaſure againſt ſuch as have bin executioners of his rebukes, when they have not performed them with pity, *Zech.* 1.15. *Iſa.* 47.6. *Pſal.*69.26,27. His Anointed Ones muſt be very tenderly handled, and have no harm done againſt them, (*Pſal.*105.14,15.) whereſoever

ever they wander. *Moab* hath a charge to do so, *Isa.*16.3,4. and in defect thereof his controversie is dreadful with the Nations, *Ezek.*25 throughout, so chap.26. 2, 3. *&c.*

2. But positively and in general thus. Though the Lord doth not assign these Tortures, these fiery Tryals to his Children, for want of love to his, or from any delight he hath in such Tortures considered in themselves; Yet many times the Lord hath higher and better ends to promote then their deliverance; ends that have more of good in them than these Tortures can possibly have of evil; and when it is so, these dispensations are not only excusable, but are to be justified, *Good is the Word of the Lord.* As namely,

1. Sometimes in giving his darlings thus to the power of the Dog, he designs to bring to light the worth and excellency of some *Truths* of his, which otherwayes would be much obscured, if not quite excluded from among the children of men; namely, such Truths, in the vindication of which his children are called and brought forth thus to suffer, being wrought to a contentedness, rather to endure torments than to let them go. When a soul or people having obtained help from God, continue witnessing to such Truths whatever it costs them; There is reflected this honour upon Truth, as was said of it of old, *Great is Truth, and it shall prevail*; whereas if it should be as it is with the generality of Professors at this day, when a Truth comes to be spoken for, there is such a shrinking, twisting, shifting to evade the dint of the Tryal, how would the World have too just cause to say, What is there in your beloved Truth, more than in our be-

loved Error? What is your Profession more than ours? your Religion more than ours? If there were any excellent thing in it, you would do and suffer somewhat excellent and extraordinary for it, to take off this stumbling block and occasion therefore from them who seek or desire occasion; the Lord is pleased to steel a people to this height, *We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth*, 2 *Cor.* 13.8. And then to shew a proof of Truth in them, and the power and goodness thereof, he puts them on a tryal proportioned to this design; he hath some truth of the Gospel to shew in *Paul*, and then must *he be troubled on every side*, 2 Cor. 4. 8,9,10. *chap.* 6.4,10,11. *chap.* 11.23. to 29. If the truth of Christ be in him, no man shall stop him of his boasting, none of these things move him, or separate him from the love of God. Truth shall be tryed in those vessels of earth, though it be by fire seven times, and the furnace seven times hotter than aforetime.

2. Sometimes the Lord doth, by these Tortures, assert and clear up the sincerity and inward value and excellency of those *Virtues* or *Graces* of Christ which are his own, and his admirable workmanship in their Souls. These pass up and down among men as meer delusions from the Devil, and hypocrisie in the professors of them. And now it is the interest of the Lord's honour, and the vindication of the operation of the Spirit, that these be put upon some tryal that may search their very root and bottom, discover their foundation to the neck. When God speaks of his Workmanship and Image in *Job*, Satan undertakes, if he could have the stripping him of all his outward accommodations, touch all

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he hath, and he would curse him to his face: That attempt failing, he is confident, that if he might have the torturing of him, the touching and tearing his bones and his flesh, he would curse him to his face: and if he durst assert his confidence of his success in such an enterprize to the face of God, may we think much of his confident imposing his suggestions on the projects and conclusions of his children? He did attempt the green Tree, and its no marvel if he do the Dry. Now while he would bear God (if possible) and doth bear the World in hand so confidently, that he hath instruments of Cruelty, that would whip and kick the new-creature in any man to nothing, and herein make God a Liar (as in the former) and an Imposture (as in this) the Lord delivers the dearly beloved of his Soul into the enemies hand (though with sufficient restrictions) Take him Torturer, try him to the bottom, and when all comes to all, *when he is tryed, he shall come forth as Gold*; Job 23.10. And though till his word of deliverance came to his *Josephs*, the *word of the Lord tryes them, while their feet are hurt with fetters, and they be laid in irons*, Psal. 105. 18,19. *They pass through fire and water, yet he brings them into a wealthy place*, Psal.66.10,11,12. Men and Devils shall know that the Faith, Love, Zeal, Patience, Courage, Holiness, &c. wherewith he hath endowed them, have that of Truth, Virtue, and Worth in them, as doth undeniably constitute them more excellent than their neighbours, and that an excellent Spirit is found in them, so as none of these tortures numbred up, *Rom.* 8.35. to the end, is able to separate betwixt them and their love to God, and uprightness with and before him.

3. Sometimes the Lord doth by these Tortures take occasion to heighten the honour of his own Power, Arm, and Influence, which are day by day administered to bear up his children, when it is manifest they have no external props to stay them up, but are *out of weakness, made strong*. This brings out a more evident acknowledgement, That *the power of Christ rests upon them*, 2 Cor. 12.9. *God is in them of a truth*, 1 Cor. 14.25. Its true, as long as times and providences hold to keep off pains from the body, chains from the legs, stripes from the back, famine from the belly, other props and principles may be presumed to bear one up: but when there is no fruit in the Vine, no flock in the Field, no herd in the Stall, none shut up nor left, yet then to rejoyce in the Lord, to glory in tribulation, to accompt it all joy to fall into divers of them, and they great ones; this is convincing, that such are kept, and kept up by the mighty Power of God; underneath such must needs be everlasting arms. What convictions came upon the two great Monarchs, by the great support the three Worthies and *Daniel* (*ch.* 3. and *ch.* 6.) had from the Lord, to yield their bodies to torment! The former, because they would not joyn with false worship; the other, because he would not cease practising the true: they gave glory to the God of heaven, and upon all occasions confess, that an excellent Spirit was found in them.

4. Sometimes the Lord brings about this end by it; he hereby brings forth a more plain and naked discovery of the wickedness that is in the world through lust. Many times men come in upon Dominions, and the exercise of Power and Authority with most plausible insinuations, protestations and declara-

declarations of their design and temper, as if no other than the disposition of Lambs were in them, whereon they raise a name and repute of benefactors, *Luke* 22.25. or merciful Lords, and reckon it no small part of their interest and business to raise and maintain in the spirits of people, the supposition of some indelible marks of the nature and majesty of a Deity is stamped upon them, and sutably, to get a reverence of them as most sacred; when many times to open and undeceive the minds of poor souls held in such blind devotion, the Lord lets them alone, and exposes the bodies of his dearest ones to their cruelty, that no man may glory in men above what is written, but that coming to a plain discovery of men and things in their own evidence, as *Psal.* 36.2. the sons of men, as well as the children of God, may breath after the Lords arising to rule the earth, and become the Governor among the Nations.

Thus we see for high ends, and unto glorious advantage some are tortured.

The Second Enquiry put, is, *Why but some?* men would be gratified, and if God be so honoured, *why not all tortured?* A few *Reasons* may be considered here also.

1. There are but *some tortured*, because God is pleased to accompt but *some* worthy to bear and wear the glory of being thus used for his Name-sake. There are *some* of whom the Lord saith, *They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.* Who are *counted worthy* to walk in white? Why, they who are come out of great tribulations, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the *lamb*, *Rev.* 7.14. Though there be some points

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of honour, of which it may be said, *this honour have all the Saints*, Psal. 149. 9. yet it holds not true in this that we speak of, they who had the first stripes for the Name of Christ, *rejoyced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his Name*, Acts 5. 41. They have marks of distinguishing favour, who *bear in their body the marks of the Lord Jesus*, Gal. 6. 17. Alwayes carrying about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the Life of Jesus may so much the more be magnified and manifested in their mortal flesh, 2 *Cor.* 4. 10, 11.

2. *All are not tortured*, because the Lord sees all of his Servants have not power to bear such tryals; as all men have not faith, so all good men have not the like strong faith, though they may have the like precious Faith. Their Faith may carry them to Heaven who yet may not have that degree and strength of Faith to carry them through Tortures to heaven; not that they who have most, have any thing to boast of above others, as being better than they, the differance is only in bestowing mercies, which are distributed variously even as the Spirit will, 1 *Cor*, 12. 11. yet still a proportion of tryal is measured out sutable to their strength, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. for he knows our frames, and in measure doth debate with us, and as the day is, so our strength shall be, *Deut.* 33. 25. and even as there are children, young men, and Fathers in Christ, 1 *John* 2. 13. so have these their tryals as they can, and that they may be able to bear them.

3. *All are not tortured*, because all are not *called* to be tortured; the Lord hath other imployments for some that shall as sufficiently prove their faithfulness, and improve their strength, as if they had been

been tortured. Some of the Saints may as really honour God in a Meeting, as others of them may on a Gibbet, every member hath not the same office (*Rom.* 12. 4. 1 *Cor.* 12. throughout) not the same imployment, shall not by the same manner of doing, or dying, glorifie God, *John* 21. 19. God seeks for a man to stand in the gap, and make up the hedge, *Ezek.* 22. 30. Every man is not looked for in that place of danger: it's good to be where God looks for a man.

4. *All are not tortured*, because the Lord will be magnified in distributing the tryals of the body of Christ otherwayes than he did the tryals of their Head: its true, the tortures that were laid on him were to meet on him alone, he was to tread the Wine-press alone, and of all the people there was none to help him; they that thought they could drink the Cup he was to drink, or be baptized with his Baptisme, did not understand themselves: He looked and there was none to help, & he wondered there was none to uphold, therefore his own Arm brought him help, &c. But now in the fellowship and similitude of Christs sufferings assigned to the body, although there be a compleatness of suffering appointed to the whole, of which the Apostle speaks, *Col.* 1. 24. and though there be a common spirit of fellowship and simpathy of bearing one anothers burdens, through which they are all baptized into one body; yet is there distribution made of them, into the various parts, each member having that assigned him, which infinite wisdom sees proper for him, so that none may boast against others, as if he had no need of them; though *Paul* had laboured and suffered more than all, yet

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he had not ſuffered all, and could not ſay to the weakeſt, *I have no need of thee.*

5. Laſtly, *All are not tortured*, becauſe the Lord will roll away the reproach, and remove the uſual ſtumbling-block which Satan raiſeth up to the turning the weak out of the way of the Lord; namely, That the enquiring after and profeſſion of Jeſus Chriſt, doth indiſpenſibly neceſſitate and bind over unto all manner of hardſhips; ſuch can never be in reaſonable expectation of good day more, but muſt bid adieu to all creature comforts, and eſpouſe the quite contrary extremities: its true, A dying to, a denying, nay, a hating of all our lower comforts is required to be learned in the beginning of their way who will be his Diſciples; But whether they ſhall be actually put upon that tryal, and really deprived of them, is left to be diſpoſed of in the breſt and good pleaſure of him, who knows what part of the wrath of men, and ſuffering of Saints, will praiſe him; and the remainder he will reſtrain, the abſolute concluſion therefore of ſtumbling Sinners, and diſcouraging Saints, as if their bread would fail, and, as a Lion, he would break all their bones, are hence to be expelled, as having no juſt ground to be inſiſted on, as real obſtructions to our following the Lord. Tempted Souls are apt to get their ſpirit quite worn out with a fearful expectation of the moſt fiery tryals, when as it may be the Lord hath appointed no ſuch thing at all for them, and in their following on in this way, they have met with little or nothing of what they feared. A few Practical *Inferences* here ſhall cloſe up the Point.

Uſe 1. Is it ſo, that God hath appointed but *ſome* to be Tortured, not *all*; it then yields ſome ſtay againſt

againſt thoſe ſurprizing amazements that are apt, eſpecially in ſuch dayes as theſe, to ſeize upon the ſpirits of people, who are looking toward *Zion* with their faces thither-ward; moſt good people are looking upon Penal Laws and Statutes made and making againſt them; if they hold on in ſuch a profeſſion as they have made hitherto of Chriſt Jeſus, all muſt be baniſhed, all muſt be ſold as ſlaves, all muſt be impoveriſhed, impriſoned, or the like; Why then, *ſaith a poor creature*, what ſhal I do? I can never lie in a naſty priſon, being uſed to a ſoft bed, freſh air, good diet: Saith another, I ſhall never endure another clymate, to have laſh and labour, that have been bred up in a Land and State of fulneſs: I can never live if I am forced to ſuch hunger and poverty as the Laws do threaten me. Why, Soul, do not reaſon thus; thou knoweſt not what ſupplies of ſtrength the Lord may furniſh thee withal if he call thee to ſuch a condition, *Out of weakneſs, many have been made ſtrong*; But beſides, thou ſhouldſt not fret thy ſelf with ſuch an expectation, thou knoweſt not that any part of this ſhall be thy portion: Yes, yes, (will ſuch object) I am ſure if any man in the town or countrey, it will be me; ſuch and ſuch have particular enmities to me, &c. Why, yet thou knoweſt not but the Lord may preſerve thee in his way from ſuch rage of men and ſtrife of tongues; thou mayſt be of them whom God reſerves. *Baruch* cryed out, *Wo is me now, for the Lord hath added grief to my ſorrow, &c. Jer.* 45. 3. perhaps of the heavy and dangerous ſervice he was called upon to go where *Jeremiah* could not, *ch.* 36. 5. 6. he feared ruine and tortures inevitably, yet God had wayes to hide him, *v.* 26.

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and to give and ſecure him his life for a prey, *ch.* 45.5. *Moſes* had many dreadful objections and diſcouragements againſt going upon that thankleſs difficult, hazardous meſſage God ſent him on, *Exod.* 3.10. *What am I*, verſ.11. *they will ſay what is his Name*, verſ.13. *They will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice*, ch.4.1. *I am not eloquent, of a ſlow ſpeech, and of a ſlow tongue*, verſ. 10. *Send by whom thou ſhouldeſt ſend*, v.13. All ſpringing from fear of the iſſues of the undertaking, and of the miſcarriage in it, which when it came to be put in practice, there was not one of the feared things occurred in his path, though ſome other tryals did: Unbelieving fear of theſe dreadful conſequences of following God, is very fruitful, in forming Lions in the way, as if there were no avoiding of them, or no reſtraint deſigned by that Arm which ſetteth bounds to the Sea, *Hitherto ſhalt thou go, and no further; there ſhall thy proud waves be ſtayed. He bringeth the counſel of the Heathen to nought, and maketh the devices of the people of none effect*, Pſal.33.10,11. Its not unuſual that *they fall into their own net, whilſt we eſcape*, Pſal. 141.10.

Uſe 2. If it be but *ſome* that are Tortured, and they ſtand diſtinguiſhed by the abſolute ſovereignty and gracious diſpoſal of the Lord, who appoints their call, anointing, and ſeaſon, as it pleaſeth him; on whoſe will alſo the with-drawment of influences hereunto doth depend: Then it may caution you and me to take care how we judge of men that are aſſiſted, or not aſſiſted in point of *enduring tortures*. Its not the ſmalleſt infirmity of this day, there is a preſent over-valuing and under-valuing men and parties, according as there appears or diſ-appears

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an ability to endure the tortures, that attend the tryal of their profeſſion: *The perſons of ſome are had in admiration becauſe of advantage above what is written; and the perſons of others ſo diſpiſed, as if God were not able to make them ſtand*; that is a needful counſel in a caſe not very different, *Rom.* 11.18. *Boaſt not againſt the branches, for if thou boaſteſt, thou beareſt not the root, but the root thee*; and the teaching therein, hath been oftentimes enforced on me by that determination of our Lord, which is admitted frequently to take place at this day, *Many that were laſt ſhall be firſt, and the firſt laſt*: And it falls frequently under obſervation, That men, as well as things, do very ſpeedily and often, countermarch and ſhift places: Many tall Cedars, who did run well, ſuffer many things, gave great ground of perſwaſion that they would have gone thorough, have notwithſtanding at one point or other faultred, deſerted their ſtation, and (as *Sampſon*) grown weak as another man, when perhaps on the ſame ground a poor weak believer, over-looked and diſpiſed by moſt, *hath obtained grace and ſtrength from on high*, to make good that poſt, and to walk from ſtrength to ſtrength in the Name of the Lord his God. So that all glorying or being puffed up for one againſt another, is excluded here. *Let not him boaſt that putteth on his Armour.*

Uſe 3. Muſt *ſome* be tortured, muſt *all* be tryed; is not the day of the expectation of greater things than theſe yet over? Then let us learn to prepare our Faith and Patience, get on our Armour and gird it on; take heed how you be drawn into a ſleep of ſecurity from the preſent interval of Calm and Reſt, which the Lord is pleaſed hitherto to continue

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to you, in a very wonderful manner. Some are (if not tortured yet) ſorely tryed and tempted, while you have your mercies and opportunities ſo peaceable about you; you ſhould be reckoning this is a ſpace allowed you to gather courage, not to contract ruſt by reſt; but laying up a ſtore againſt the evil day, that queſtion ſhould be ſtill with us in a way of endeavouring its reſolution, *Seeing we look for theſe things, what manner of People ſhould we be?* ſtanding on our guard expecting to be drawn forth, and ready to comply with that Call, *Who will riſe up for me againſt the evil-doers? who will ſtand up for me againſt the workers of iniquity?* Pſal. 49.16. in a faithful, humble, Lamb-like readineſs to follow Jeſus Chriſt, and witneſs for him, though it be in tortures, temptations, or wherever he goeth.

But to proceed to ſome farther Obſervations in the words, *Others were tortured, &c.* It is implyed to make up the ſenſe at every ſentence, *by Faith* they were ſo, although it be not ſo expreſly named. By Faith they were tortured, by Faith they accepted not deliverance; by Faith they looked for a better Reſurrection, all the famous doings, and fearful undoings recorded in this Chapter, are to the honour of Faith. This expreſſion therefore that comes firſt to hand, *By Faith ſome were tortured*; may be conſidered two wayes.

1. It hath a great truth in it, if we thus underſtand it by Faith (that is by means of their Faith, upon this occaſion and for this reaſon) they were tortured, even their Faith; This was the quarrel the Devil and World had with them, *viz.* They were men of Faith. Or elſe,

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2. The expreſſion may be thus underſtood. *By Faith they were tortured*, that is, they were ſupported in and carried through their Tortures living or dying, by their Faith; *This was the victory* that overcame the world in all theſe tortures, *even their Faith.* I take this latter to be moſt immediately aimed at in this place, and ſutably is my eye to proſecute it. Though I take the former not to be excluded, or at leaſt we may draw ſome uſeful conſiderations from that ſenſe. *By Faith*, that is, upon occaſion of their Faith, they were quarrelled with, ſingled out, and tortured by Satan and his inſtruments: *Great Faith expoſed them to great ſufferings:* And ſo it is now, and may afford us this Obſervation.

Doct. 3. *That a lively Faith poſſeſſed and profeſſed, is that which will enrage and engage the worlds higheſt violence and cruelty on him that hath it.*

I intend a very brief diſpatch of this (not being ſo immediately perhaps intended in the words) and that by conſidering Faith, as contracting and incurring this rage, in a two-fold ſenſe or reſpect.

1. Conſider we this Faith unfeigned as it is *poſſeſſed*, or reſpecting its inward root and principle, as it dwelleth in the hidden-man of the heart in that which is incorruptible; againſt this, and *as ſuch*, doth the Prince of Darkneſs mainly bend his batteries. Its true, he brings his torments to bear upon the limbs and members of the Body, the ſenſitive part; but nothing is more evident than that his deſign lies farther, as appears by this, That if by the frights or feeling of theſe tortures he can but get in pollution and defilement upon

the ſoul of a poor Saint; if he can but corrupt that from the ſimplicity, or debauch that of the virginity it hath with Chriſt; then is the offence of the Croſs ceaſed, the torments are all called off, the work is done. He is mad to ſee any ſoul delivered from his dominion, and tranſlated into the Kingdom of the dear Son of God, and there lives by this Faith on comforts, that he cannot intermedle withal; derives ſtrength and influence, which he cannot obſtruct; is acted in a life, and on principles, and reaſonings, which have a fixed and unalterable antipathy to his former courſes; nay, have vertue and ſucceſs to *make reſiſtance to Satan, oftentimes to put him to flight*, 1 Pet. 5. 9. Jam. 4. 7. And *this is the Victory that ſo frequently overcomes, not only the World*, 1 Joh. 5. 4. *but the Prince of the World*, 1 Joh. 4. 4. Now there is little reaſon that we ſhould wonder to ſee Satan rage, and in a rage to bring his inſtruments of greateſt cruelty to bear upon a ſoul that lives by Faith above him, and in ſuch an advantagious way of conqueſt over him, as the Gates of Hell cannot prevail to do him real harm, to bring him down from his excellency. But he ſtill ſtands on ground, and fights with inſtruments that are inviſible and invincible; ſuch Births the Red Dragon watcheth to devour, caſts his floods after, raiſeth war againſt, upon this foot of account, *They keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jeſus.* Upon this foundation alſo he exaſperates all his crew, acted by the ſpirit of this world, who are enforced to gnaw their tongues for pain, that in all their on-ſets from generation to generation, they could never come at, nor quell that ſpring and root of action and ſuffering, where-

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by they have been ſo perpetually baffled, and all their coſtly and promiſing attempts been brought to nought. Hence all their conſultations and endeavours reſolve themſelves into this iſſue, To rid the world of them who by a conſtant ſteady teſtimony of their drawing vertue, as Olive-trees, from the God of the whole earth, being here in torments to them that dwell upon the earth.

2. We may conſider Faith in its *Profeſſion*, or the Profeſſion of our Faith; that is to ſay, not only as it inwardly unites a ſoul to Chriſt, whereby he draws forth conſolations and aids to do ſo wonderfully on Gods behalf; But alſo as it engages a believer to ſtand forth in the face of the World to teſtifie againſt it that its deeds are evil; bearing witneſs to the Holineſs and Faithfulneſs of God, in oppoſition to the ſtream of the luſts of men. Thus it contracts rage to the utmoſt, *Joh.7.7. Me it hateth, becauſe I teſtifie of it that the works thereof are evil.* When the whole demeanour of a Chriſtian, both in point of Worſhip and Converſation, is kept on, ſo as not to be tempted to fall down before the Idolatry on one hand, or fall in with the debauchery on the other, which is propoſed under Countenance, or impoſed by Law. The world cannot bear the words of ſuch a people, *Amos 7. 10, &c.* Can the abomination of a people be offered up before their eyes, and will not that Nation ſtone them? *Exod.8.26.* In this matter the Diſciple is not priviledged above his Lord, *Joh. 15. 18, 19.* The world will hate ſuch a people, as it hated him, for witneſſing againſt their ignorance and ſuperſtition. *Ye worſhip ye know not what! we know what we worſhip*, Joh.4.22. *Ye are too ſuperſtitious: whom*

ye ignorantly worſhip, him we declare to you, Acts 17. 22,23. This is enough to get the world in an uproar. This is ſaid above, *Rev.* 11.10. to torment them that dwell on the earth; theſe two Prophets that have no other weapons but the Blood of the Lamb, and the Word of their Teſtimony, the Teſtimony of Jeſus, which is the Spirit of Prophecy; and in this Meſſage, and under this Anointing, witneſſing, though in ſack-cloth, againſt the evils that are in the world through luſt, lighting them, as Gods Candleſticks, the way to heaven; this torments men of earth. No wonder then that they torment you; why, your converſations, teſtimony, profeſſion of your Faith, torments them. *Chriſt came not to ſend peace in the earth, but a ſword*, Mat. 10.34. *but a fire, and what if it be already kindled?* *Luke* 12.49. Is Chriſt delighted with ſuch contention? nothing leſs. But theſe are the conſequences of the luſts of men, irritated occaſionally by the faithful rebukes of the Goſpel of Chriſt, and a practical profeſſion of the Faith thereof in ſuch as embrace and obey it.

A word or two of Practical Improvement, and I ſhall leave this Point.

Uſe 1. If Faith both in the *Poſſeſſion* and *Profeſſion* of it, be apt to draw the rage of the world in the extremity of it upon you; this ſpeaks the reaſonableneſs of this Exhortation, that you give diligence to it, that the Faith any of you profeſs, be Faith *unfeigned*, 2 Tim. 1.5. Since, I ſay, Oh ye profeſſed Believers, your Faith in God, and faithfulneſs to God, is that which you muſt expect will enrage the world againſt you; I beſeech you ſatisfie not your ſelves with any Faith ſhort of ſuch

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as will carry all the world in a way of victory before it. I have thought that at this day there is no man so miserable, as a professor of Faith which is not right and real; he will contract the worlds rage, anger, and displeasure, because he professeth some Faith; and he incurrs the Lords anger and displeasure, because he but professeth, because he hath not true Faith, *Faith unfeigned.* Interest in former dayes, led some to profess at an high rate, and their credit engageth them now not to fetch their turns too short upon it; but the worlds rage chargeth them so hot in the rear, that they cannot hold it, but are forced in, by open Apostacy, to dash themselves against the thick Bosses of his Buckler.

Use 2. As it concerns you that your Faith be *unfeigned*, so the like reason and necessity ariseth from the Promises, that your Faith be *unmixed*, in your present contest with the world: that is, that they may have nothing to charge you with, but your single Faith, and such things as are the proper off-spring of it, and of faithfulness to God upon it. It was the admirable advantage *Daniel* had against the greatest Council that day in the world, *Dan.*6.4,5. *They could find no occasion against him forasmuch as he was faithful, unless they could find it against him in the Law of his God.* The like had *David* against the envious and evil eye of *Saul*, that God was with him, and helped him in all his affairs wisely and faithfully, 1 *Sam.*18.12,14,15, 28,29,30. There was no occasion administred to them that sought occasion. The contrary whereunto is very detrimental to you, when they that pursue you have ground for that charge. *Jer.*50.7.

We offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord the habitation of Justice, even God the hope of their Fathers. See the Spirits strict caution against this, 1 *Pet.*2.20. *What Glory is it, if when ye are buffeted for your faults, you take it patiently?* see *ch.*4.15. Oh it will be your blessedness, that they who pursue you, though they will not do it perhaps without a colour, yet they may do it without a cause, may have nought to charge you with than that which (when their vizor of Rhetorical eloquence and invective malice is stript from it) resolves its self in a sober gracious eye into this, it is for their being true to Jesus Christ, their Faith in him, their subjection to him, their adhering to his Cause, Name, Works, Institutions. Such a bottom will render you at length more than a Conqueror.

Use 3. Take heed how you admit a Parley with those Reasonings, which tend to prejudice you against believing, to make you think hardly, at least to think slightly of Faith, in that it involveth you in so many dangers and perplexities. Satan lies at a Bay to possess you with offence, especially in such daves as this: Christ tells you, *These things have I spoken that you might not be offended; Blessed is he that is not offended in me:* But, Oh! how strong are temptations to reason thus? why, this way of Professing, of Meeting, of Exercising, is the high way to make me poor, a beggar, to undo me at last, and what shall I do then? Such Reasonings have need be rejected with utmost abhorrency.

Use 4. These Considerations should sweeten Heaven and Glory to us: If while we live by Faith,

Faith, we draw the World, and such a world of miseries on us, it should quicken the edge of our longings (not in a way of impatience neither) to be dissolved and be with Christ, who is far better; *Where sorrow and sighing shall flee away, where shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for former things are past away*, Rev. 21. 4.

But to go forward to another Point. *By Faith some were, &c.* Understanding it thus, that, *by Faith*, as the principle that bare them up and carried them through as conquerors, *they were tortured.* This sense of it is most agreeable with the drift and design of the whole Chapter. The nobility of their Spirits commends the excellency of their Faith; To be tortured, and bear it patiently, is well; but so may many do from other Principles and Causes, they cannot tell possibly how to escape: but now to chuse affliction with the people of God, to become companions of them that are so used, to improve what God doth in it, and think this is best of all; a Spirit thus managed, and demeaning its self through the sharps of it, commends the Fatih by which he doth it. *By Faith they were tortured:* the tortures on one hand, and temptings on the other, made no impression, no alteration on them, they were the same as formerly, or rather much better. *By Faith* they were so——. The Note is this.

Doct. *That the Faith of Gods Elect is of invincible power to make them Conquerors in all their tortures.*

What I have to say to the clearing up this Point, I shall offer, by endeavouring to shew these

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two wayes wherein Faith contributes to the performing this high service.

1. *Faith* doth contribute to bear up under tortures themselves (and much more under less tryals, as imprisonment, banishment, &c.) by way of evidencing things to the Soul, which otherwise are not so clear and substantial, as its the office of Faith to make them, *Heb.* 11.1.

2. *Faith* contributes hereunto, by way of ministring influence and assistance to the soul, strengthening and heartning it to indure that which otherwise would seem insufferable, break and sink the Spirit.

As for the former of these, Faiths proper tendency to give light and evidence to the soul, and by evidence to beget a conquering magnanimity, commends it self to us as its conversant about a three-fold object or imployment.

1. *Faiths* main evidencing work, is concerned about the grand Interest and Propriety that the Soul hath in God, and God in him; to get this case once cleared up beyond controversie, and to maintain the soul in a satisfactory veiw of an interest in Christ. Where this is uncertain or clouded up, the soul sets upon such hazards with much trembling, and good reason it should do so, all things considered. But where this Mystery of Union and Relation to Christ is cleared, to and by believing, the soul becomes impregnable; as might be abundantly made out by that *triumph of Faith*, recorded exactly and accurately, *Rom.* 8.33. to the end. Can any of the instruments of torture or cruelty there ennumerated, separate such a one from the love of God, who stands resolved

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and undoubted upon Gospel-grounds? nay, *He is more than a Conqueror; Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, though all the day long we be killed and counted as sheep for the slaughter*; yet can none of these, managed either by men or Angels, do any thing of importance to the shaking of such a one. When he arrives to that pitch of triumph, *Psal.* 27. 1. *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?* You may guess how far he is hereby removed out of the way of danger: inroads may be made upon him, but he cannot be easily moved.

2. *Faith* hath another matter to clear up in a way of evidence, and by doing it effectually, it contributes exceeding encouragement to a Believer to endure torments; namely, it evidenceth the Truth, and Goodness, and the special Relation that God hath to the Cause that it suffers in, from all the clouds, aspersions, and calumnies that men would cast upon it. I do not say that Faith can make a bad cause good, but it can make an obscure cause clear. It is not enough that a Christian have the clearness of a personal interest in the Lord, when he comes to endure torment; but it is needful that he have the clearness of a good Cause, and a good Call, that he suffers on, or else he may suffer as an evil-doer, and what thank will that be? the truth and goodness of his Cause needs then to be cleared; and Faith is of singular efficacy this way, when perhaps the wisdom and deviliſh policy of men have been at work with opprobrious reproaches to vilifie it, or some time-serving Apostates, with their sophistical arguings,

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and ſcholaſtical diſtinctions, as *Jannes* and *Jambres*, to invalidate and reſiſt the Truth; to which ſervice Scriptures, and Arguments are not wanting to be wreſted, for the perverting the plain wayes of God, when the caſe is ſo, and a poor Chriſtian is frequently ſo aſſailed and baited with them, that he knows not how to give a diſtinct, ſatisfactory, convincing anſwer to all theſe ſophiſms; nay, perhaps cannot demonſtrably extricate himſelf from all the ſubtle entanglements that of this kind may be drawn about him. Now is it the office of Faith to clear up the innate goodneſs and truth of the principles it ſuffers on, that at leaſt to its own ſatisfaction the ſoul is abundantly cleared and convinced therein, and united thereunto: And this hath helped the Martyrs of Chriſt to bear ſo bold a teſtimony to divers Truths, of which they were not able to make a ſcholaſtical defence by way of diſputation, yet could ſet to their ſeal by dying, or ſuſtaining any tortures. — When this point is once ſatisfactorily evidenced, that the Cauſe is Gods, that Jeſus Chriſt is intereſted and imbarked in it, it gives ſtrong conſolation. What an encouragement was that, 2 *Chron.* 20. 15. *Be not diſmayed at this great multitude; for the battel is not yours, but Gods.* So was it to *David* with the *Philiſtine*, 1 *Sam.* 17. 47. *The battel is the Lords.* When a ſoul can ſee God not only intereſted with it, but really more deeply intereſted and concerned than its ſelf is, it yields full aſſurance of good ſucceſs at laſt. *I know the Lord will maintain the Cauſe of the Afflicted, and the Right of the Poor*, Pſal. 140. 12. becauſe it can intitle God to it, *Pſal.* 74. 22. *Ariſe, O God, plead thy own Cauſe.* This alſo will be-

beget a dread on the ſoul, how it gives way to any temptation to betray it. This Truth, this Profeſſion, however men call it little, however it may ſeem I may be ſaved without it, its no point of Salvation; yet it being Chriſt's more than mine, though committed to my truſt, to deny it, is to deny Chriſt; and to betray it, is to betray Chriſt: and though (as the common cry is) none ever ſuffered upon ſuch a point, none in the paſt generation ran the adventure of tortures on ſuch an aſſertion; yet the ſoul, by believing, being brought to ſee Chriſts intereſt in it, and relation to it, and that perhaps this is the day deſigned to bring forth a proof to the goodneſs and worth of it, a ſoul becomes not only engaged, but inſeperably united, and impregnably ſet for the defence of it.

3. *Faith* hath a further work to do in point of evidence, and thereby adminiſters abundance of ſtrength to a weak Chriſtian to endure any tortures for the Lords ſake, and that is, gives evidence of the real nothingneſs that there is in whatſoever the adverſary is able to do in point of torment, if the matter be indeed laid upon a right ballance, and held with an impartial and ſteady hand; and that in theſe Three reſpects:

1. *Faith* is called into Counſel, (in the excluſion of the reaſonings of fleſh and blood) it manifeſts abundance of winde and emptineſs in all the threatnings of the ſons of men; what they ſay of this kind, are but great ſwelling words of vanity, an empty ſound, of little affrighting ſignification, *Knoweſt thou not* (ſaith *Pilate*) *that I have power to crucifie thee, and power to releaſe thee?* He would

would willingly have had his majesty and threatnings very terrible; but what is Christ's answer? *Thou couldest have no power except it were given thee from above.* The power the Devil himself hath, though he be the Prince of the Air, cannot get over an hedge without special Commission, *Thou hast* (saith he concerning *Job*) *made an hedge about him.* Hence it is, that when their threatnings and preparations have been to heat the Furnace seven times hotter; they feared not the wrath of the King, as seeing him that is invisible, *Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us,* able to divert that fiery threatning; and if he will not do so, yet able to bring us out again. These threatnings, encrease the cry for boldness.

2. *Faith* helps the soul to see that all their *profers* and *tenders* of deliverance, of honour, of preferment, or whatever else such poor worms can mention, is as meer *a vapour* as the other: When Satan made the tender to Christ, *All this will I give thee*; all this power, saith he, will I give thee, and the glory of them, for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will give it; if therefore thou wilt fall down before me, all shall be thine, *Luke* 4. 6, 7. Our reason would have accepted it. Christ hath the promise of the World, only Satan hath the possession of it, and must be expulsed by main force; now at this juncture, one bow will do it; and were it not better vail once, than from generation to generation be in a continual contest for it, and his seed exposed to such tortures to obtain and maintain the ground that is thus gradually gotten? No, Jesus will not value all the supremacy the Devil could surrender in the World,

World, worth one bow to obtain it; *Get thee behind me Satan*, verſ. 8.

3. *Faith* in like manner makes evident that all the *terms*, articles, and propoſals of adverſaries, that ſeem very little and innocent, upon which their tortures are to be eſcaped, and their favours obtained, are very *dangerous things*; a *bow* or *cringe* at a diſtance may ſeem a ſmall matter, for the obtaining ſuch advantage, but Chriſt ſees it too great to give to Satan, for the gaining the glory of earth or heaven either. A bow to the golden Image from the three Worthies, ſeems a ſmall thing to reaſon, but its too hard to the reaſoning of Faith. A bow to *Haman* from *Mordecai* in the gate, is a ſmall matter in an eye of wiſdom and prudence, but to Faith it may not be yielded. *Daniels* retirement to mental devotions, ſeems but rational; but if that be the only terms of deliverance, in the omiſſion of poſitive inſtituted Worſhip, *Faith* ſayes the articles are too hard to be accepted of. — But of this more hereafter.

2. But as *Faith* yields ſuccour, by ſuch a way of evidencing to the underſtanding and judgement things that are obſcure, the clearing up of which have ſuch a direct tendency to beget courage; So, in the ſecond place, doth *Faith* greatly aid, by miniſtring *Influence*, and thereby bringing power and vertue with it, in furthering divers bleſſed properties and qualities in the ſoul, wherewith it receives ability to do, and to bear wonderful and inſupportable things, when the Lord calls thereunto; As for inſtance in a few Particulars.

1. *Faith* contributes toward this ſupport by way of influence, in that *Faith* brings with it, as its firſt

first born fruit, *Peace passing all understanding*, Rom. 5. 1. It draws all the tumultuating thoughts of a poor creature into such a calm and composure, that though the outward man decay, yet the inner man is renewed day by day, 2 *Cor.* 4. 16. Though the bones be broken, pain and tortures come on, yet the inner man retains its sweetness, quietness, serenity and undisturbedness; and when thus the mind is quiet, the man is invincible. Of the office of *Faith*, as it works *Peace*, I do not now intend to treat, the Scripture is full of it, *Rom.* 5. 1. *Isa.* 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is staid on thee, because he trusteth in thee.* Through this mind-surpassing peace, the heart and thoughts are kept in Christ Jesus. Where this glorious work is done, it is not the extending the external parts of a poor man that can intermedle with his joy. This joy of the Lord is his strength, he can glorifie the Lord in the fires, exercise all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness, giving thanks to the *Father*. There is indeed in the world, sometimes to be seen among carnal men, a certain greatness of spirit, whereby they do pass through tortures, to the shame of many who profess better principles; but alas! this is little better than a meer stupifaction of their senses; it besots them; is as the vinegar and gall they were wont to give to men on the Cross, to deaden their senses to their pain: The spirit of this world doth so wrap up their thoughts, that they are as if they had took that sleeping drink, mentioned, *Prov.* 31. 7. *Drink and forget their poverty, and remember their misery no more.* This is rather an imprisoning, than a calming of their spirits; they have not

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their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern betwixt good and evil, but rather benummed. Whereas this *Peace* of which I am treating (as Chriſt ſaith) *in patience poſſeſſeth the ſoul:* A man is ſaid to poſſeſs his ſoul when he hath the command and diſpoſal of all his thoughts and faculties according to the beſt reaſon. This, in the caſe in hand, is only the off-ſpring of *fixed Faith*, and admirably advantagious in *ſuſtaining torments*.

2. *Faith* contributes *influentially*, not only as it begets peace, but alſo as it brings the ſoul up to a certain *reſignedneſs* unto God, to a willingneſs to be at Gods diſpoſe; here am I, let him do with me what ſeemeth good in his ſight: That which makes *torments* to be *tortures* indeed, is when the members draw one way, and the mind another; but when the ſoul comes to be fully yielded up to divine pleaſure, this makes tortures become *no tortures*, or at leaſt to become *leſs tortures*. You ſee this eminently ſet forth in the Captain of our Salvation himſelf, while he was crucifying in weakneſs, and tempted as are we, while the humane nature would have made choiſe of that requeſt, *Father ſave me from this hour*, Joh. 12. 27. then was his Soul troubled, all was dark and intollerable; But when he fixeth in that reſignedneſs, *For this cauſe came I to this hour, Father glorifie thy Name*; then are there not only Oracles of approbation, giving aid from the moſt excellent Glory, but the Baptiſm he hath before him, how is he pained ere it be accompliſhed. And ſo in the very offering its ſelf, we ſee how his reſignation expedited his tortures, he was dead ſooner than the reſt: for when the Souldiers came to break the bones of the thieves, they brake

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not his bones; why? becauſe he was dead already. How ſo? Why he ſaid, *It was finiſhed.* bowed his head, gave up the Ghoſt, and ſaid, *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit,* Luke 23.46. Whereas the others abode in a conteſt till the laſt gaſp 'twixt ſpirit and members, loth to part, much work left undone, had no certainty (one at leaſt) of reſt for his ſoul. This makes ſore conflicts in times of torment; whereas on the contrary, how ſweet is that yielding up all to God, mentioned *Iſa.*50.5,6. *I was not rebellious, neither turned away back; but gave my back to the ſmiters, &c.* So *chap.* 53.7. *He opened not his mouth, but is brought as a Lamb to the ſlaughter, &c.* This ſubduedneſs to the will of God, by the dominion of *Faith*, then is of exceeding moment to ſtrengthen us to the induring theſe *torments.*

3. *Faith* doth influence the ſoul to bear torments notably, by bringing and encreaſing a certain *greatneſs* and nobility, a largneſs and publickneſs *of ſpirit* on it more than formerly. *Shall ſuch a man as I flee?* Neh.6.11. It begets a largeneſs of heart, in ſome degree anſwering that of *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* 4.24. unto which a baſe ſhrinking is exceeding contrary and loathſome, eſpecially conſidering by, and for whom, and to the intereſt of whoſe Name it is engaged. Its marvelous to conſider what many have endured to gratifie the luſt of a great man, 2 *Sam.*2.14,15,16. to provide for their families, to aſſert the liberties of their Country, and the like; and is not the will, pleaſure, honour of Jeſus Chriſt of far greater moment to be witneſſed unto to the higheſt? It was a gallant ſpirit in *Joab*, which encouraged the people,

2 *Sam.*

2 *Sam.*10.12. *Be of good courage, let us play the men for our people, and for the Cities of our God, and the Lord do that which seemeth him good:* The like reasonings will Faith suggest to beget resolutions. I have now an opportunity, which I may never have again, to play the man, the Christian, the Believer, for my God, my Christ, for his Gospel, his Institutions, his Cause and Interest. What can be too hot or heavy to be done or suffered upon this accompt?

4. *Faith* influenceth notably in this matter, by giving the soul a prospect into, and a fore-taste of that better Resurrection, realizing and rendring substantial the promised Glory thereof unto it. It's remarked of our Lord, that *for the joy that was set before him, he indured the Cross, and despised the shame*, Heb.12.2. *Moses*, when he was threatned, indured, *as seeing him that is invisible*, and *having his eye to the recompence of reward*, chap.11.26,27. *They took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods, who know in themselves they have in Heaven a better and more induring substance*, chap.10.34. *Stephen* looking stedfastly into Heaven, was not dismayed at the frowns, threats, tortures of his fierce adversaries, *Acts* 7.55,56.

I shall only draw this into an Applicatory Improvement briefly, and pass along upon the whole of what hath been said to this Head.

Use. You are with a very loud voice, men and Brethren, exhorted and beseeched, to give all diligence to the Concernments of your Faith. Above all your gettings, covet a true, lively, Gospel-faith; above all your keepings, strive to hold fast, and contend earnestly for this Faith. If ever there

were dayes that called loud for the Life of the Faith of the Son of God, theſe dayes call for it. *I had fainted* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *unleſs I had believed*: And truly you will be apt to faint in the day of adverſity, as if your ſtrength were ſmall where your Faith is not good. Take heed therefore of all things that may either adulterate it from its ſimplicity, or ſtop and obſtruct it from its growth. God hath begun to exerciſe your ſouls, and to prove your profeſſion in a way of tryals; its true, you have not yet reſiſted unto blood, unto tortures, as others have, and you (at leaſt ſome of you) may. The grand Queſtion your ſouls ſhould purſue to a full and ſatisfactory reſolution, is, What ſtock have you, proportionable to ſuch an expectation? Here I ſhall propound theſe Two Exhortations.

1. *Prove your Faith.*
2. *Improve your Faith.*

1. *Prove your Faith*, or take it in the Exhortation, 2 *Cor.* 13.5. *Examine your ſelves, whether you are in the Faith; prove your own ſelves:* Do not take up principles upon truſt, perſwaſions of a good condition upon truſt, in a day when you are at the point of being put upon fiery tryals; *Every mans work muſt be tryed*; the time is come that judgument muſt begin at the Houſe of God. Every one muſt bear his own burden. Here you would be directed particularly to ſee, (1) That your *Faith* be true. (2) That your *Faith* be ſtrong. (1) That it be true; feigned *Faith* will beget but fading Comforts; nay, as was ſaid, It will do greater miſchief in ſuch a day, than no Faith at all. Here Evidences would be needful for diſcovery,

very, and Arguments with Directions, for exhortation, that ſouls who upon the tryal find themſelves ſhort, would not ſtrike off through diſcouragements; but rather ſtrike up with ſo much the more diligence to make their Calling and Election ſure, for helps, in order whereunto they muſt at preſent be referred to what hath been offered in other exerciſes: The like might be offered to preſs you to look after ſtrength of *faith*.

2. Be exhorted, ſuch of you as find that good work of *Faith* with any power in your ſouls, that you do not let it lye by you, as a Talent in a Napkin, or as the Sword behind the Ephod, ſince there is none to it, to make you valiant to do exploits: Oh! be much in this work of drawing it forth upon conſtant, quick, and lively exerciſe; as namely,

1. *Improve your Faith againſt your Fears.* It hath a ſoveraign and excellent vertue that way, in the experiences of all the Saints. As perfect Love caſteth out Fear, ſo doth perfect *Faith*; indeed it is *Faith* working by Love only doth it: *What time I am afraid, I will truſt in thee. In the Lord I have put my truſt, I will not fear what man can do unto me.* Have *Faith* upon its principallity of exerciſe, when the floods of ungodly men are apt to make afraid.

2. *Improve your Faith* againſt all your offences and murmurings that you meet withal in your ſouls, occaſioned and multiplied by the ſtumbling-blocks of the day. Proper Doctrines cannot be preached, proper Duties cannot be practiſed, proper Truths cannot be profeſſed, but Satan raiſeth up multitudes of Objections againſt them, of

which this usually beareth the mastery, *Spare thy self*; they resolve themselves into this usually as their bearing reason, The fear of man. In such a time, how needful is that Character, to be found, *Great peace have they that love thy Law, and Nothing shall offend them*, Psa. 119. 165. When tribulation and persecution for the Word cometh, how by and by men are offended, *Mat.* 13. 21. It was one great part of Christ's care at parting with his Disciples, that they should not be offended, at mens putting them out of the Synagogues, and thinking they do God good service in killing them, *John* 16. 1, 2. When *John* was in prison, it is not easie to answer the questions, nor to remove the offences that arise upon it, Whether Christ be the Christ or no? *But blessed is he* (saith Christ) *that is not offended in me*, Mat. 11. 6. Oh! improve your *Faith* against these stumbling offences.

3. *Improve your Faith* unto a full conquest of the World, and the things that are therein, respecting all the affrightments and allurements of it, as it presents and presseth you with its objects of love and fear. Oh! in such staggering times, the dirt that clogs the feet of a Believer, the thick clay, that either in *act* or *desire* he is busied to load himself withal, is extreamly detrimental to taking streight steps to your feet: How easily did the present evil World draw *Demas*, *Judas*, and divers others, to a betraying, denying, deserting their high profession? The victory that overcomes this (you have heard) is your *Faith*.

4. *Improve your Faith* against all the filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit; let such as name the Name of the Lord Jesus depart from iniquity;

a little ſin will deſtroy a great deal of valour, whereas holineſs carried on towards its perfection in the fear of God, will yield encreaſes of ſtrength and ſecurity againſt the worſt that man can do unto you, for *who is he can harm you, if you be followers of that which is good?* Holineſs will ſecure you from harm: They who torture you, if they cannot defile you, cannot deſtroy you; they may kill you, but cannot hurt you; you ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond death. And in as much as you are frequently ſhewed what power *Faith improved* hath to promote holineſs, the Lord make you faithful herein.

Thus far hath been ſpoken to ſet forth the excellent and admirable nature of believing, conſidered in its encounters with, and conqueſt over torments. It remains, that we now take into view its vertue and excellency, as it conflicts with, and gets ſucceſs againſt another adverſary, no leſs difficult to be attempted than tortures be, no leſs apt to overcome, and that is, *the tempting tenders of Deliverance.* And herein is the greatneſs of the atchievment, that the *Faith* which enabled them to bear *tortures* without grudging, enabled them to refuſe the *tenders of deliverance* without complying. [*They accepted not Deliverance.*] The word we read *Deliverance*, denoteth in the proper ſignification of it *full Deliverance*, Deliverance very compleat; and is here applyed to ſignifie ſuch a deliverance as did not only conſiſt in a meer relaxation of the torment, as ſuppoſing them to be upon

ἀπολύτρωσιν: λύτρωσις. *Redemptionem notat, addita propoſito inſinuare videtur perfectam redemptionem.* Leigh. Cr. Sacr.

the Rack, in such a case when the sinews begin to snap, and the joynts to sever one from another; if nothing more were offered in the deliverance but meerly to let down the rack and take off the creature from the extremity of torment, though that may for a time seem to gain upon a meer man, yet such may the case be, that such deliverance may be worse than death its self: You reade in *Rev.* 9. 5,6. of a torment, in which men shall seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and it shall flee from them. Implying, that such may be the *torment* on a poor creature, as that to be killed out-right, is better than to be spared; Knock me in the head rather than let me live thus in Torture. But the deliverance here is *full deliverance*, a being reduced to a state of ease, rest, and quiet; together with any other accommodations that can be desired to compleat it; All this will I give thee, Credit, Trade, Preferment, Applause, and what not?

[*They accepted it not.*] They did not give it friendly entertainment, such as one would shew to a stranger when he hath been long absent. They were at such a pitch of raisedness, that they would give such deliverance, deliverance *on such terms*, not any friendly welcome, or entertainment, that other men, perhaps, would gladly do, they could not salute it, bid it, God speed, could be in no fellowship with it.

[*That they might obtain*] The word doth not signifie any expectation, that they had, or could have of dealing with the hope of the Resurrection upon the terms of strict merit. As if there were any equality or proportion betwixt their enduring

tortures,

tortures; and their receiving the *Reſurrection*; nay, when they have done all, left all, ſuffered all, they are unprofitable ſervants; but only thus, in thus ſtanding under *torments*, thus withſtanding deliverance upon unworthy terms, they were in the Lord's path of expecting the comfortable foretaſtes now, and aſſurances of a further glory.

[*A better Reſurrection*] *Paul* preſſed hard to obtain the Reſurrection from the dead, *Phil.*3.11. which is not only a Reſurrection of the dead, *both of the juſt and unjuſt*, but that which is called, *the firſt Reſurrection*, Rev.20.6. for, *the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt*, 1 Theſ. 4. 16. *They which are Chriſts at his coming*, 1 Cor. 15. 23. *For them that ſleep in Chriſt, ſhall God bring with him.* This is called the *Better Reſurrection*; not only better than their *torments*, but better than their proffered Deliverance.

The main Point that I ſhall propound to be handled from the words, is this;

Doct.5. *That it is no leſs the excellency of Faith to reject the tempting Tenders, than to ſuſtain the cruel Tortures of a trying Day.*

The ſuppoſition is of a perſon put upon this *Dilemma*, he is brought into a condition of *torturing*, be it *actually* ſo to his feeling, or only *vertually* in the threats or Laws that repreſent them at hand, or to his fears. In this condition he hath two *offers*, two *tenders* made to him: Firſt, the *tender* of the *Torturer*, and he offers Deliverance, full and compleat deliverance. Secondly, the *tender* of the *Comforter*, and he offers the Reſurrection. And now the man is put to it, *Will you comply with the deſign of the Torturer, and you ſhall have Deliverance?*

Or, *will you adhere to the design of the Comforter, and you shall have* (perhaps not any ease, mitigation, but rather an increase of pain; But) *at length, a lot in the end of the dayes, in the Resurrection?* Look to your choice, let your choice be the off-spring of a well-deliberated and digested judgment upon the case. Now here lies the excellency of believing, in fixing the soul upon principles of the highest reason; to cleave to this (*the Resurrection*) is better. When sense comes in with its judgment, life is sweet, *Skin for skin, and all a man hath he will give for his life. The body is more worth than food, and the life than raiment. Death is a King of terrors.* Banishment is terrible, tortures intollerable, hunger insufferable; *Spare thy self*, this evil shall not overtake thee. What saith Friends, Wife, Children, *Oh! do not disgrace your self, do not destroy us; men will praise thee when thou dost well for thy self.* But what saith *Faith?* [Ah, will a carnal heart say, I hate him, for he never speaks good to me, but evil.] Well, but what will it say? Why, there is a glorious Resurrection that will repair all *tortured bodies, tottered limbs, massacred members*, will all be done up better in the Resurrection? And in mean time, these light afflictions are but for a moment, and not worthy to be compared with that glory which is ready to be revealed in us. Scorn the *torturer*, slight the *tender*; reject the *offer* at man's hand, it is and hath a lye in the right hand: fall into the hands of the Lord, commit the keeping of thy soul to him in well-doing, as into the hands of a faithful Creator: be assured he is able to keep that which is committed to him against that day. This is an hard saying, flesh cannot bear it, but faith can and doth.

Now,

Now, that we may not miscarry or offend on the right hand nor on the left in this narrow point, I suppose it may be requisite to draw the matter thus into Consideration; Deliverance from *tortures*, and consequently from any *other*, or *lesser tryals*, may be considered Three wayes.

1. In a simple and abstract Notion in its self, unclothed of other circumstances and dependencies, and then we shall see what acceptance Faith will give to it when tendered.

2. We are to consider Deliverance as in the *torturers* hand and design, as an Engine or Instrument to carry on the same end, which he *attempted* to extort by *torments*; namely, to bereave the man of his Testimony.

3. We may consider Deliverance, as it stands compared with, and opposed to the *better Resurrection*; these Two standing in competition in their *tender*. —

Now in each of these respects, there are several considerable Truths to be taken notice of, especially in such times of *attempts*, to debauch all manner of wayes.

1. For first of all, If we consider Deliverance apart from the projects and designs of men, who are *tempting* and *attempting* by it, to bring about their ends, upon a *poor tortured* Child of God; I say, take it in a single and abstract notion, apart from such entanglements, and the matter admits of a very vast difference in the judgment, and to the acceptation of *Faith*. For if the case can be clearly and truly so stated, *Faith* can and must accept deliverance with all thankfulness, with honour to God, and with great advantage to the soul

con-

concerned in it. —— And therefore as we pass along, I would willingly speak a little distinctly to this case, that some stop and prevention may be put to the prejudice, that may otherwise arise upon a rigid insisting on this Doctrine; as if the tendency of *Faith* in times of tryal, were inevitably to run all upon the Rocks, without any respect had to the preserving our selves, or any thing concerning us, or committed to us of our external mercies. Being therefore the contrary is to be supposed, and is implyed all along under the main Truth asserted in the Text; I will fairly lay down this Supposition:

☞ *That Deliverance* (as Deliverance may be considered) *is a Mercy not to be refused, but accepted by Believers.*

Deliverance from *tortures*, from *tryals*, if you would think of it very abstractly, and in its meer simple nature; Deliverance from harm and evil may be reckoned among a Christians middle things, I mean such things as in their own nature are neither good nor evil, but do receive the impression & denomination of good or evil, sutable to their relation, improvement, or design to which they are bent and levelled, accordingly as they are either used or abused. And therefore it is that the Spirit of the Lord (*Eccles.* 9. beginning) declares that there is neither love nor hatred by all that of this kind is under the Sun. But in this sense it falls not immediately under our present discourse. A little farther therefore. — Deliverance to a Christian represents it self so, as he can clearly and comfortably eye it in God's hand, and as something conveyed to him by the goodness of a good God.

God. And when deliverance can be thus beheld, not only as coming in a common effective providence, but by the approbation, allowance, and good will of the Father, then ſuch deliverance is entertained with the beſt acceptation of *Faith*, he compaſſeth God about with ſongs of deliverance. To this Point a little may be ſpoken. There are ſeveral reſpects in which no man is ſo capable to accept Deliverance, ſuch Deliverance, as a Believer.

1. *None, as he, can tell what to make of Deliverance.*

2. *None, as he, knows how to improve Deliverance.*

3. *None, as he, can accompt with God for it at the laſt Day.*

1. Firſt of all; When Deliverance comes in, in ſuch a way as he may accept of it, none is able to make ſo much of it, put ſuch a value upon it as he; every thing on this ſide Hell is Mercy. It's of the Lord's mercies we are not conſumed. *Faith* advanceth the value of every received good, according to the love that ſent it, the price it coſt, the grace that brings it; it ſayes as *Jacob*, *I am leſs than the leaſt of all thy mercies*, Gen. 32. 10. *What am I, that thou haſt brought me hitherto?* ſaith *David*, 2 *Sam.* 7. 18. It traceth out, and owneth the footſteps of divine good-will in every little thing, and much more when it ſees ſuch ſalutations: Life is a mercy, Liberty a mercy, exemption from Tortures a great mercy, Deliverance out of them a greater mercy. Hence the Soul is compaſſed, and compaſſeth his God about with ſongs of Deliverance.

2. None

2. None knows how to improve a Deliverance, how to use it when he hath it, as a Believer: If he have Life on this side Death, Liberty on this side Bonds, Ease on this side Torment, he is taught to acknowledge and reckon he is not his own in it, 1 *Cor.*6.19,20. but must use it to the glorifying God in soul and body, which are his. None is under such obligations, none hath such objects and opportunities to make an high improvement of them as he hath who by believing looks into them, others bestow them on their lusts.

3. None, as he, knows what account he must give to God for such Deliverances: as he must reckon for every idle word, and all the deeds done in the body, so he must yield an account of all his receipts whatever they be, and therefore must so receive and improve as one that must be judged by the Law of Liberty; and hence durst not say of any Mercy as they, *Our tongues are our own, who is Lord over them?* Psa. 12.4. On these accompts, and others that might be mentioned, the Believer hath reason to know deliverance, the worth that is in it, and his duty about it, more than any other. Now as none can deal with deliverance as they, so is it a very high duty incumbent on such to receive deliverance at the hand of God; then to accept deliverance is his duty, and to give it such acceptance and entertainment in Truth, as he expressed in Complement, and in a strain of Oratory & Rhetorick, *Acts* 24.2,3. the terms only changed: the Believer may thus express himself to the Lord; Seeing I enjoy great quietness, (great deliverance, great preservation) and that very worthy deeds are done to such a worm as I, by thy Providence, I accept

accept it *always*, and *in all places* (my dear Father) *with all thankfulneſs*. None do and can give it ſuch acceptable entertainment as the Believer of whom we treat. The matter therefore thus ſtated and conſidered, he doth not, he durſt not refuſe ſuch deliverance: For if he ſhould not thus receive it,

1. He were, in this refuſal, a meer deſtroyer of himſelf; a thing abhorrent to godlineſs: he were, I ſay, acceſſary of the violence done upon himſelf. *Saul* is as guilty of his own death, if his Armour-bearer thruſt him through, as when he falls upon his own Sword. If Life, Liberty, or any Mercy may be had in God's way, the refuſal of it is the deſtroying our ſelves ſo far as that Mercy extends. Though we are required to hate Father and Mother, and our own Lives, in a ſence, yet it is far from the intendment of the Spirit we ſhould careleſly run them upon hazard: no, ſuch know their bodies are the Temples of the Holy Spirit, and they ought to uſe them well for his ſake who dwells in them: He that abuſeth the Temple of God, him will God deſtroy.

2. Such a refuſal of Deliverance, when it may be had in the Lord's way, is a manifeſtation and an act of the higheſt ingratitude and unthankfulneſs to the Lord that can be thought on. To ſcorn or ſet at nought his favours, is very much beneath the ingenuity of a Believer; who ought to imbrace all occaſions to ſhew forth the high praiſes of the Lord, which are due unto his Name. Bleſſed are ſuch as dwell in the Lord's Houſe, they have frequent ſuch occaſion to be praiſing him, and it is comely for the upright.

3. Should

3. Should he not accept Deliverance, when it may be had in the Lord's way, it would be found an act of high violence and injuſtice towards others, who may be involved and concerned equally with themſelves. Some have Wives, and Children, or other Relations, in the fleſh; now, as *if he provide not for his own, and eſpecially for them of his own houſhold, he were worſe than an Infidel*, 1 *Tim.*5.8. So if he draw them into ſufferings, from whence he might have deliverence in a way honourable and acceptable to the Lord, he is acceſſary of their miſery, their wrong will be upon him. —More of this kind might be ſpoken, but I fear too much of it is ready to be alledged on the common principle, which is fruitful in ſuch kind of reaſonings: *Save thy ſelf, ſpare thy ſelf*; this harm ſhall not come unto thee, as *Mat.*17.22. I ſhall only draw this Conſideration into ſutable Improvement, in a few Inferences.

1. If this be ſo, then may we take up this Inſtruction, That Godlineſs, and the profeſſion of it, doth not inevitably run and neceſſitate a Chriſtian upon the hazard and loſs of every thing he hath, or induce him to caſt away all: Though it doth indeed require him to prepare his ſtuff for removing, to ſtand crucified in his affections unto them, and ready to make ſurrender of them whenever the Lord needs them (as was ſaid of the Colt) or is pleaſed to call for them; yet it alſo directs to an excellent way of receiving, enjoying, and uſing them; buying as if he bought not, having, and uſing all theſe as not abuſing them, 1 *Cor.* 7.29, 30, 31. Do not therefore take up hard thoughts of Godlineſs, becauſe of the Doctrine of Self-

Self-denyal, the Croſs at entrance, or the Tryals and Tribulations that are appointed to attend the Profeſſors of it.

2. Hence it will alſo follow, That falſe and wrong Principles are not to be accompted good, becauſe perſons do, upon them, run all they have upon ruine. As there is a kind of reſpect and pity kindled in tender and ingenious hearts toward a people who ſuffer under the profeſſion of principles that have an appearance of Holineſs in them: So doth a kind of ſtedfaſtneſs to thoſe principles, and reſolution to run all things to ruine on them, very much tend to raiſe admiration and applauſe to ſuch a people and their profeſſion: whereas on the contrary, I deſire you to take this as a ſtanding Rule;

☞ *That the goodneſs of a Principle is not to be tryed and determined by the reſolution of the Sufferer, but the reſolution of the Sufferer by the goodneſs of his Principle.*

Good-men may be very weak under good Principles, and Bad-men may be very heady and reſolute under bad principles; and this well conſidered, would lead off our eyes from gazing on, and having mens perſons in admiration upon one hand when we ſee them ſtand, or being apt to judge them and their cauſe if we ſee them inſident in hours of temptation to ſhake and totter.

I confeſs its very beautiful and deſireable to ſee ſtedfaſtneſs of Soul, as the off-ſpring of Truth, fixed there in Goſpel-evidence; and the contrary hereunto, hath given not a little advantage and occaſion to weak ones, to queſtion almoſt every thing, whether there be any thing of Truth in it, ſeeing

ſeeing the generality of all Profeſſors have been in the entrance on this Tryal, ſo hardly fixed to any thing that endangereth the loſs of their external accommodations. If it be enquired, *Why ſo many ſhrink, and totter, who profeſs the Truth?* I anſwer: It doth not argue that their Principle was naught, and ſo the cauſe of their tottering; but their ſtanding upon that principle was not ſound, they were not joyned to the things they profeſſed, they were not *mixt with Faith*, Heb. 4. 2. There are many principles on which many have adventured their *All*, and endured great *Tortures*, and yet no *truth* or *ſoundneſs* in them. See 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. *Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it were nothing.* Which implyeth a poſſibility, on hollow and unſound bottoms, to proceed thus far, and yet find no acceptance with God at all in it. We may conſider a few Principles that will carry men to endure *torments*, and yet not ſuch as we may juſtifie.

1. Firſt, there is *Self-Righteouſneſs*; a deſign to eſtabliſh a man's own Righteouſneſs in oppoſition to the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt in the Goſpel: its wonderful to conſider what *tortures* it will wade through in compaſſing its deſign. You know that Obſervation the Apoſtle makes of it, *Col.* 2. 23. where ſpeaking of the attempts made to deceive and ſpoyl Chriſtians of the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, partly by the Heatheniſh Philoſophy, and partly by Jewiſh Superſtition, they meet in this, *A ſhew of wiſdom they have in Will-worſhip, and humility, neglecting the Body, not in any honour to the ſatisfying the fleſh.* Fleſh will be ſatisfied, and a deſign of fleſh carried on vigorouſly, to promote its

its righteouſneſs, though it be in a neglecting, diſhonouring, offering violence to the body. Men have, and do admit great hardſhips on their body, to promote the righteouſneſs of the fleſh.

Again; Another principle that will carry men through ſufferings wonderfully, is, *the luſt of the fleſh:* when there is ſome untamed luſt that ſeems to be croſt by ſufferings, and eſpecially if it can be hid under the cloak of ſome profeſſion. As for inſtance; the Pride and Ambition of a man, where it rageth and is unmortified, it will ruſh and make a noiſe a great while through ſufferings. Such a man will ſcorn to be ſaid to bow, to be called a *Turn-coat*, to yield to ſuch a ſubdued unworthy generation. So likewiſe headineſs, frowardneſs, where it takes head and heart, it will ruſh as the Horſe into the battel: *The Counſel of the froward is carried headlong*, Job 5. 13. Its maſter-piece is blind madneſs.

3. Moreover, *Strong affections to the perſons of men, and admiration of them, becauſe of advantage.* The Diſciples would go and die with *Lazarus*, *Joh.* 11. 16. They would follow Jeſus into Priſon, and into Death, *Luke* 22. 33. Affections led *Peter* upon the Waves for Chriſt's company, but could not keep him from ſinking. Many would go to the ends of the Earth, for the love they bear to ſuch a Miniſtry, to ſuch a People, &c. But if this be the height and ſtrength of it, it will abate and decay upon ſharp tryal.

4. Laſtly, *When a man's caſe becomes deſperate, as Saul:* Men will fall upon their Sword; *Judas* hang himſelf; Men will deſire to die, and it flees from them.

Upon the whole this Concluſion iſſueth forth; The goodneſs of a man's Bottom, Spirit, Cauſe, or Principle, is not to be concluded from the reſoluteneſs of his ſtanding; and on the contrary, other wayes muſt be ſought to determine and cenſure the badneſs of a Principle, beſides the Apoſtacy of Profeſſors from it. *All they that were in* Aſia *forſook* Paul, 2 *Tim.* 1, 15. *At his firſt Anſwer, no man ſtood by him*, ch. 4. 16. *All ſcattered to their own from Chriſt*, Joh. 16. 32. *Sought their own things, and not the things which are Jeſus Chriſts*, *Phil.* 2. 21. And yet Truth's profeſſed by them never the worſe for all this. Let's then be leſs raſh in judging them and their ſtanding, taking heed rather leſt we fall; God is able to graft them in, and make them ſtand again: Deliverance when God may be ſeen bringing it, and enjoyed in it, ought to be accepted, and *Faith* fitteſt to give the beſt acceptation to it.

2dly. But to paſs this by, my aim in the next place principally, is to conſider Deliverance as it is in the *tempters* hand, as an offer of his, and as in deſign to carry on the ſame projects, that he had in the Torment, and that is, To enſnare and debauch the perſon, when the Tortures have made ſuch a breach upon the members, as the Tormenter thinks he hath cauſed ſome impreſſion by way of deſpondency on the mind, that he ſuppoſeth former reaſonings are ſomeway weakned, and former reſolutions abated; now is Deliverance tendered as a bait, to draw the ſoul off from its ſtedfaſtneſs. Now *Faith* is of power to interpoſe, to relieve the *poor, tortured, tempted ſoul*, ſetling it upon the power of God, and by gathering up his

ſpirits

ſpirits to help him to make that gallant repulſe, that honourable refuſal to it in all its painted and alluring beauty; I ſcorn your Deliverance, Get behind me Satan, thou art an offence to me. You have the excellency of *Faith* deſcribed in other ſubjects (*verſ.37.*) *They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder*, They were tempted, *were ſlain with the ſword:* Among other conqueſts of believing, this was not the leaſt, that in the mideſt of other cruel Tortures, *they were tempted*, and yet were conquerors. How tempted? Why, as is ſaid above, (*v.15.*) they had opportunities to have returned, to have eſcaped; and this was the nobility of their ſpirits, they ſlighted ſuch opportunities, when temptation lay in opportunities. We are therefore here to obſerve this further Suppoſition, to be implyed in the former aſſertion; ☞ *That the faireſt offers of Deliverance in a Torturers hand, may carry the foulest deſigns of Temptation in them*; and then is *Faith* eminently concerned to take heed of them, and reſiſt them. Indeed, if perſons will be by no means perſwaded to look otherwayes than on the out-ſide of the offer, it is not ſtrange if they take, if ſuch ſwallow them down, as the unwary Fiſh doth Hook and all; but if they belong to God, they muſt vomit them up again, God ſhall caſt them out of their belly. When God hath a ſoul under the Rod, upon the Rack, in meaſure, when it breaketh forth he will debate with it, he ſeeks to make impreſſions by frequent ſolicitations, to get entrence by ſome means or other for his deſigns of grace and holineſs; which he doth gradually chafe in this way, *Job* 33.14,15,16,19, *&c. ch.* 36.8,9, 10. In like manner, though, with a differing de-

ſign, when Satan can but have the winnowing, (*Luke* 22.31.) and hampering of a child of God, (*Job* 1.11,12. *ch.*2.5,6.) his whole deſign is to make impreſſions of pollution, *Curſe God and die, let go thy integrity*; and the remembrance and experience he hath how many ſtrong men have fallen this way, encourageth and emboldens him to deal frequently this way. As we ſee thoſe inſtruments of his did with *Jeremiah*, ch.20.10. *All my familiers watch for my halting; peradventure he will be inticed, and we ſhall prevaile againſt him, and take our revenge on him.* *Sampſon* had a great ſpirit, and by plain force could not be ſubdued, but a *Dalilah* is prevalent to enſnare him. *David* ſhall have *Michal* given him to Wife, but in deſign that ſhe may be *a ſnare* to him, 1 *Sam.* 18.21. There being *no Inchantment againſt* Jacob, nor *Divination againſt* Iſrael. *Balaam* the Son of *Beor*, gives counſel to take *Iſrael* in a way that had more of Efficacy to divide betwixt them and their God, than could be expected from *Balacks* fighting them, or *Balaams* curſing them, *Micah* 6.5. *Numb.* 25.1, 2, 3. *Every man is tempted when he is drawn aſide of his own luſt, and inticed, &c.* James 1.14, 15. By theſe wayes is a poor ſoul overcome, and brought into bondage frequently, when open violence will do but little harm on him. Now the attempts of the enemy in ſuch a ſeaſon, when the poor man is in the fear or feeling of Torture, are carried on one of theſe Two wayes:

1. Sometimes ſo groſs is the Deſign, ſo apparent is the Project to debaſe, and debauch, as every eye may ſee it, and he that runs may reade it: and conſequently ſo, as the common reaſon of men, not

not only may detect it, but offer relief against it; when Violence springeth up into a Rod of wickedness, it is usually thus, and then the escape and conquest is more easily obtained: the very principles of humanity guiding a man in his choice and refusal. *In vain* (saith *Solomon*, Prov. 1, 17.) *is the Net spread in the sight of any Bird.* When the Project lies so open, as Reason and Morality dictate and assist against it, its not then so properly attributed to *Faith* to do it. — But,

2. Satan's Project is many times carried on very covertly, and lies hid and concealed under many very specious shews and pretences; the danger of standing out, the reasonableness of yielding and complying, are ready to be disputed with much demonstration. Now when really the case is thus, and the snares of Satan are thus couched and latent, the soul is only preserved by the meer grace of God, and *Faith* comes to be magnified in the glory of its operation: for short of that, & while *Faith* is not upon its quick exercise, the soul is lyable, ere ever it is aware, to be taken and carried away, his reason lyable to captivity; and the abundance of these Cavils may divide the man within himself, against himself. To be in a capacity of resolving all these Doubts and answering, or at least stilling & silencing all these Objections, on the side of Truth. This speaks the victory of *Faith*, and proclaims the man a Believer indeed. Of this there is a very pregnant Instance in this Chapter, in the case of *Moses*, vers. 24, 25, 26. The deliberations of his mind are expresst in acts of Chusing, Refusing, Esteeming; all which were imployed in weighing a case very like this, of

which the Text treateth. He refuſed Deliverance and Preferment, with all the Accommodations imaginable; and imbraced Afflictions, Reproaches, Sufferings; not as out of direct neceſſity, but as of choice, upon terms that muſt neceſſarily expoſe him to the common Cenſure of Obſervers.

We may weigh and accommodate to our uſe ſome Circumſtances in that affair. *He refuſed to be called the Son of* Pharaohs *Daughter.* Its ſuppoſed, and moſt probable, *Pharaohs* Daughter was Heireſs to the Crown of *Egypt*, and having no Children, would have adopted *Moſes* as her Son, to entitle him to the Succeſſion of the Crown of *Egypt*, or at leaſt to advance him to an high capacity of Honour and Dominion in that Court. Now all this he refuſeth; not only diſ-eſteems, but denies to touch with it; and this not on a fit, or in a heat, as a youthful frollick; for the Spirit notes it to be when he was come to years; And *Acts 7. 22, 23. He was learned in all the Wiſdom of the* Egyptians, *mighty in words and in deeds: and when he was full* 40 *years, it came into his heart, &c.* All which ſhews him to have been, both as to his Age, and the ripeneſs of his Underſtanding, every way capable of putting forth acts of mature and deliberate Conſideration, eſpecially in a matter of ſuch moment to him. Well, thus capacitated, he Refuſeth that, and it, not meerly to exchange for a retired contemplative way of living, wherein he might more deſireably accommodate his noble *genius*, by being ſequeſted from the noiſe & ſenſualities of the Court; But, *He chuſeth to ſuffer Afflictions with the people of God:* their ſtate at this

time

time was very terrible in the Iron furnace, where he could expect at beſt nothing but laſh and labour: both which muſt needs be the more irkſome, for that he had not been bred, or accuſtomed to them: but he ſtands fixed in his choice, as upon an eſtimate of things on all hands, in which he concludes he had the better bargain, *Eſteeming the Reproach of Chriſt greater treaſure than the riches of Egypt, &c.*

It might be eaſie to repreſent to our ſelves, what abundant Reaſon, according to fleſh and blood, would ſtand up againſt this choice of his. Would not *Sence* have ſaid, Never make this Choice, you will never be able to endure the Brick-kilne, the cruel Task-maſters, the hard fare of Onions and Garlick, who have been bred ſo delicately, fed ſo deliciouſly, clad ſo honourably? Would not *Policy* have ſaid, Never make this Choice, it will favour of a deſign, That you intend to grow popular among an heady mutinous Nation; you purpoſe to take your advantage to rebel againſt the King, to ſhake off the yoke of Servitude; you are known at Court, and will be eyed, and incur the wroth of the King above any man in *Egypt*, Keep your ſtation, meddle not with Changes, now the eyes and expectation of all begin to be fixed on you? Would not *Parents*, and *Friends*, have ſaid, Make not this Choice, you will utterly over-throw our fortunes, to which you may now be probably in a capacity to raiſe us; in this your act you will involve us under the ſame cloud, and common hardſhip and ſuffering with your ſelf; and to be made miſerable by the hand that we expect advancement by, is a double miſery? Would not *Iſrael*, the beſt

and wiſeſt of them ſay, Oh! whatever you do, make not that Choice; Now you are in a fair probability to do us good in a publick capacity: You may *be Pharaoh!* and then may let *Iſrael* go: at leaſt, you may be another *Joſeph*, a Second in the Kingdom; and in that capacity may obtain, if not a reſcinding, yet a relaxing of the rigour of the Laws that bind our burdens ſo inſufferably upon us, that cut off our Males, and uſe us with ſo many inhumanities as are unſufferable, unexpreſſible; Whereas if you come among us, you may make our yoke the heavier, and burdens the greater, may beget jealouſies concerning us, and ſo render us the more miſerable? —— Theſe, and others, may be thought to have had weight in them. But herein now breaks forth the excellency of believing; *By Faith* he turns the deaf ear to all theſe clamours, is ſatisfied in his Choice on the other hand; and that not in an head-ſtrong, reſolute frollick, but as having the beſt and moſt convincing demonſtration on his ſide; he choſe for the better, for greater riches in hand, for a greater recompence of reward in hope. The other *tender* which he refuſed, he ſaw had more of an *Hook* than of an *Help* in it, was a *ſnare* rather than any *advantage*; and therefore he utterly rejects it. At this Point is a notable tryal of the Truth, ſtrength, and excellency of a Believers *Faith*, when he is helped to ponder a Deliverance, an Accommodation, at the very brink of tryal and torture, and if he finds it too dear (as a man may buy Gold too dear) he there and then rejects it, and rather chuſeth the ſuffering than the ſinning ſide. This leads us now, to the main *Practical Queſtion* in this day.

Queſt.

Queſt. *How ſhall a Chriſtian know when his Deliverance may be bought too dear, when he muſt imbrace any Tortures, rather than touch with it, though it be tendered?*

Unto this I ſhall endeavour to Anſwer in *Five* or *Six* Particulars.

1. When the greateſt *Deliverance* is tendered on the one hand, and the greateſt *Tortures* threatned on the other. If I cannot come at the *good* of that Deliverance, but I muſt commit ſome *ſin* in coming at it, I may not in that caſe touch with, but muſt refuſe that Deliverance. The Reaſon of this is manifeſt, There is more *of evil* in the leaſt ſin, than there can poſſibly be *of good* in the greateſt deliverance. You have the caſe cleared in the Inſtance laſt given of *Moſes*, there was but one little word that turned the ſcale of his determination ſo powerfully, and that was, *they were the pleaſures of Sin for a ſeaſon.* He could not accept of, and improve the accommodation of the Court any longer without ſin; he ſaw how ſin had intermixed and incorporated its ſelf into them, and ſo they could be no longer urged but as temptations to, and coſtly coverings of ſin; and on this ſingle bottom he rejects them, and reckons the worſt reproaches and ſufferings, where Chriſt may be had, and incomparably far better. *One Sinner* (and ſo one ſin) *deſtroyeth much good*; as a few *dead Flies will much ſweet Ointment*, Eccleſ. 9. 18. & 10. 1. It will not ſerve the turn to ſay as *Lot* did, *Is it not a little one, and my ſoul ſhall live?* The extenuating, leſſening, and excuſing ſin in ſuch caſes, is very frequent, but exceeding dangerous; and then is *Job's* charge eaſily incurred, *Chap.* 36. 21. *Take heed*

heed, regard not Iniquity, for this hast thou chosen rather than Affliction. When great Affliction and (that which we call) a little Sin, come in competition in our choice, its usual to chuse Sin rather than Affliction.

Object. But it is usually objected, *Why is it not safe, of two evils to chuse the least?*

Sol. I Answer, This is very dangerous to be reduced to practise, and utterly contrary to the mind of God, when the evil in the Question is about any Sin; for a man is not to commit the least sin, to avoid the greatest suffering; no nor to commit one sin to avoid another. For whereas many shelter themselves under this refuge, which is not a rest, because it is defiled, they would do well to consider, That there is no dispensation of God that necessitates any son of men alive to commit any sin whatsoever. God doth not need any sin of ours to promote any end of his, nor any proper end of ours.

Object. But if the Question ariseth, *Did not many good men sin, when they were driven to such extremities, to avoid sufferings breaking in upon them? Did not* Abraham, Jacob, David, *and others, do so?*

Sol. I Answer, All this is most true: but mark it, when ever you find any of these recorded in the Word of God, they are there set as so many Sea-marks: As you see a *Bouy* upon the top of a Rock, to signifie that Death and danger are there, if you come neer that place; they are not as Land-marks which you are directed to approach unto, but as Dungeon-lights, from which you must keep the fartherest distance, in dark and stormy nights. Moreover,

over you may obſerve, That uſually where-ever you find a Believer hath avoided a danger, or graſped at a priviledge in a way of ſin, uſually God hath made that a bitter priviledge to them by that time he hath done with them. As in the caſe of *David*, ſeeking his Satisfaction and Comforts in *Bathſheba*, which he attempts to come at in a way of Adultery and Blood; for beſide the breaking his communion with God, and the breaking his bones, the Sword never departs from his houſe. *Jacob* he lies and uſeth indirect courſes to come at the Birth-right of *Eſau*, and the Bleſſing of *Iſaac*: but obſerve him, all his dayes he walks in a very troubleſome pilgrimage, the reſt of the few and evil dayes he had to live; his gray hairs were brought with ſorrow to the Grave.

Object. But it is ſometimes objected, *The perſon had in his eye and intention, the bringing about ſome good by it, ſome priviledge to ſerve God the quieter, and ſome liberty of enjoying what he hath the better to do good to them that are neceſſitated, and may not that excuſe and plead for a little latitude, which ſome acts of his have?*

Sol. I Anſwer, as *Job* did his Friends, *chap.* 13. 6,7. *Hear my reaſoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips. Wilt thou ſpeak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?* This very way of reaſoning you have ſtated and refuted by the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 3.7,8. *If the Truth of God hath abounded by my lye to his Glory, why yet am I judged as a ſinner?* As though he had ſaid, If the Glory of God was brought about, or the Truth of God brought forth to evidence the more by a lye, or fault of mine, Doth not that acquit me from being a ſinner, and

blame-

blame-worthy in so doing? His answer, is with the greatest vehemency rejecting it, as a slanderous report, and that which was falsly fastned either upon his Doctrine or Practice, that a man may do evil that good may come thereby; God doth not require or accept any sin of ours, to perform any service, or promote any ends of his.

2dly. A second case in which the question is resolved, when I may not accept Deliverance, is this, When I cannot come at the good of Deliverance, but I must give a stab, stretch, or wound to a good Conscience. I ought not upon such terms to touch with Deliverance; for thus to do, were but to exchange and avoid the torture of my body, and admit in the room of it a torture upon my soul and spirit. They who will adventure to rush upon, and run down the counsel, comfort, and judgement that Conscience sets up, and would keep up in them, they little think what an hazard they run. *Paul* could stedfastly behold the Council, and tell the High-Priest (that was President of it) that God would smite him as a whited-wall, when he had this defence to make, *I have lived in all good Conscience to this day*, Acts 23.1,2,3. This makes Councils that persecute, slight and despicable; torments, sweet and easie. Though without there be fightings, yet inwardly there will be peace; whereas if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things. To have God and our own Consciences against us at once, will not be countervailed by the friendship of this world, that any obtain by stretching a good Conscience, making shipwrack of Faith and a good Conscience. I have been sometimes awakned

awakned with the dread of that word, *Jer.* 4. 11, 12. when a threatning is exhibited from the Wilderneſs, and then to have God give ſentence alſo againſt a People, that is dreadful; to have God againſt us, our ſelves againſt us, and many to one, but we draw men againſt us too in ſuch caſes, this is the worſt of torments; whereas all is rendred eaſie when we can ſay, *Pſal.* 17.2. *Let my ſentence come forth from thy preſence.* If God be for us, Conſcience for us, who then can be againſt us? who can harm us? We may reade in *Cain*, *Judas*, *Spira*, and many others, how fearful it hath been to undergo a wound in them: A man may ſuſtain his infirmities of other kinds, *but a wounded Conſcience who can bear?*

Object. Its true, *I cannot quiet the clamours of Conſcience as I would do, but I find I am very ignorant, and men tell me, This I may do, and that I may do very ſafely, and I am bound to think of them better than my ſelf, and not to prefer before their judgment the dictates of my weak Conſcience.*

Anſw. It is a very dangerous thing to do any thing againſt the dictates of an erring Conſcience, provided thou knoweſt not at preſent that it is in this thing erring. It is a queſtion among many, Whether the dictates of an erring Conſcience do bind? but ſure I am, that violence offer'd to an erring Conſcience, hath a direct tendency to terrifie him that doth any thing with a doubting Conſcience; *He that doubteth is damned if he eat: for whatſoever is not of Faith is Sin*, Rom. 14. 23. *Bleſſed is the man that condemneth not himſelf in the things that he alloweth.* Though thy Conſcience may be erronious, yet while thou knoweſt it not to

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be ſo, it is the beſt friend thou haſt under Heaven. Take heed therefore by the force of others, or the fear and treachery that is in thy ſelf, thou admit any violence done to it, leſt once ſtretching it beyond its ſtaple, it never do the offices of a good Conſcience more to thee, to counſel, excuſe, witneſs toward thy peace more.

Object. *But I have ſeen other men accept of, comply with, and yield to, that which my Conſcience makes ſuch a noiſe about, and they good men too, and yet they profeſs they have peace in it; and why may not I adventure?*

Anſw. For my part, I durſt not judge another mans Servant; to his own Maſter he ſtands or falls: Yet I have ſometimes obſerved men who have adventured in this kind, and though they have carried it with an high forehead, and put a bold countenance on it; yet there are times when one may diſcern them to have pale faces, which may give intimation, all is not well within: ſuch are under great temptation to keep up their credit till the Lord arreſt them with a new Conviction, as he did *David*, with a *Thou art the man!* and then they may, as he, be forced to cry out (how long ſoever he had carried it ſtoutly) *All my bones are out of joynt; Reſtore to me the joyes of thy Salvation, and take not away thy Holy Spirit from me.* But ſuppoſe their Conſciences do not ſmite them, they may have a kind of peace that is but from ſecurity, not the peace of God, not the peace of the anſwer of a good Conſcience by the bloud of ſprinkling. The Apoſtle tells us of a Conſcience *ſeared with a hot Iron*, 1 Tim. 4. 2. Some ſorts of violence done to Conſcience are left by the Lord to the Devils curing,

curing, who heals the ſmart of divers wounds by ſearing them; but the cure is never the more deſireable for all that. Its with Conſcience as it is with Cloth, which ſometimes the Fuller ſtrains ſo much upon the Tenters, till he break the very ſtaple of it, and then its neither fire nor water will ſhrink it (whereas being ſtrained but in an ordinary way, it would) but though it ſhrink not, you may be ſure it will have no ſtrength for ſervice. Take heed you offer not ſuch force to Conſcience, leſt you find it ſhort of ſerving you as it ſhould in time of need.

3. If I cannot come at the good of Deliverance, but I muſt betray or balk ſome Truth of God, intruſted with me as a part of my Teſtimony, I may not upon any terms touch with that Deliverance. Every Truth of Chriſt, committed to the care and cuſtody of a Chriſtian is of more worth and value than all his Comforts and Accommodations under the Sun. And he that yields or betrays any Truth thus depoſited, as a pledge to his truſt and care, for the procuring any liberty to himſelf, hath too hard a bargain of it. You have an expreſs direction, *Prov.*23.23. *Buy the Truth and ſell it not.* We are to buy it whatever it coſt, but not to barter it whatever it will yield. That was a choice Spirit deſcribed, 2 *Cor.*13.8. *We can do nothing againſt the Truth, but for the Truth.* The Glory of God may be ſo deeply engaged and imbarqued in one Truth, as all my external comforts may not be named in one day with it. It hath been an expreſſion very taking with me, *Iſa.* 43. 9, 10. God hath his times wherein moſt eminently he is put upon it to vindicate his Truth; the queſtion is brought

brought upon the ſtage and tryal of the world, who muſt either yield and ſay, *It is truth*; or elſe muſt endure the teſt of God's Evidences, who are his Saints: *Ye are my Witneſſes ſaith the Lord*, or his Son, called *his Servant whom he hath choſen*; who in the grand conteſt with all the powers of darkneſs hath, by witneſſing his good confeſſion, merited that name, *Rev.* 3. 14. *The Amen, the Faithful and true Witneſs*; a reſemblance and proportion to him, is every Chriſtian required to keep, in his being called forth to a witneſs-bearing to him. As God values every Truth of his at an high rate, eſpecially in the day that it is to be ſpoken for, ſo ſhould we. There are divers Truths that in moſt Ages are not controverted; theſe are not ſo properly the Truths under preſent conſideration, but ſuch as the deſign of the Adverſary is manifeſt to root out from being profeſſed under heaven, ſuch are *the Word of Patience*, which muſt be kept, *Rev.* 3. 10. *the preſent Truth*, which muſt be had in remembrance and eſtabliſhment, 2 *Pet.* 1. 12.

Object. *Why, is not every truth, a truth now, a preſent truth?*

Anſw. Though that which is truth at any time, abides truth at all times; yet, as hath been ſaid, thoſe truths in a moſt eminent manner are called *preſent truths*, which concern at preſent the vindication of the Glory of God, and draw on the preſent tryals of the day upon the Aſſertors of it. I note this the rather, becauſe in this ſhifting-day many that would be thought to be the Lord's Witneſſes, pleaſe themſelves with this, *Bleſſed be God we hold to Fundamentals! What Fundamental Truths have we yielded, or denied?* and think themſelves

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no way concerned to keep up a teſtimony for thoſe truths which they call Circumſtantial, ſuch as are not matters of Salvation, whether it be held or practiſed this way, or the other way. Alas! by ſuch diſtinctions and evaſions as theſe, men have let go almoſt their whole *teſtimony* about the Royal right of Chriſt, to ſet up Inſtitutions of Worſhip that are to be maintained in his Authority only. And I fear that ſuch who can ſo eaſily relinquiſh their teſtimony to preſent Truths under this pretention, *They are not Fundamental Truths*, it will be found that when thoſe Truths which they now call *Fundamental*, ſhall be brought (as they may ſpeedily be brought) to their tryal, and ſo become preſent Truths, there will other diſtinctions be found out, to avoid the offence of the Croſs concerning them alſo. For an unconceiveable weakneſs in ſticking cloſe to every Truth is unavoidably contracted, by yielding to the betraying of any Truth. Hence *Paul would not give place by ſubjection, no not for an hour* (when there was great contention) *that the Truth of the Goſpel might be continued*, Gal. 2. 5. ſo *verſ.* 14. you ſee how eagerly he *contended with* Peter, which might have endangered the Peace of the Churches, meerly, *becauſe he walked not uprightly according to the Truth of the Goſpel*. That Point which that Epiſtle handleth being the preſent Truth, which was moſt aſſaulted and endangered to be loſt in that day, occaſions him to be ſo jealous of it, that he would and did run all manner of hazards, rather than betray it. Our caſe is the ſame now: many glorious Truths hath the Lord brought forth, aſſerted, cleared, and committed to his Saints and Churches to keep un-

rebukeable tillthe appearing of Christ, especially those of his Dominion over his Saints, and others, these now being put upon a publick test upon the stage of the World, and we as Witnesses *Subpœnà* to give in Evidence to the truth and goodness of them, We durst not accept of any overtures of Deliverance, or otherwayes, whereby our Testimony to them should be balked.

4. When I cannot come at the good of Deliverance, but I must bind up my hands from being capable of doing God that service in my generation, which he requireth of me freely for the time to come; when these are the terms, Deliverance is too dear for me, and may not be accepted.—We are called unto Liberty, and withal required to *stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and not to be entangled with any yoke of bondage*, Gal. 5. 1. *Not to be the servants of men*, 1 Cor. 7. 23. For, *if we seek to please them, we cannot be the servants of Christ*, Gal. 1. 10. Now that thing which would bind up my hands from being serviceable to Jesus Christ when he calls for my service, my yielding thereunto, whatever it be, is a betraying of my Christian Liberty, which Christ hath purchased for me with his blood. We are debtors unto Grace, and may not violate that obligation, or yield to any thing that incapacitates us to discharge it, by any means, or on any terms. You reade frequently at what an high rate in several contests *Paul* stands upon his *Romane Priviledges*, he would not when in Prison came out to the detriment or disparagement of those his humane liberties, *Acts* 16. 37. And shall *Paul* think earthly priviledges to be such as he would indure

longer

longer impriſonment, rather than baſely betray them; and ſhall we who are called to Goſpel-liberties, bought at ſo dear a rate beyond his, (*Acts* 22.28. 1 *Pet.*1,18.) ſell them for a ſong, God forbid. You know when *Moſes* was upon the Treaty with *Pharaoh*, about the enlargement of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, divers overtures *Pharaoh* makes, according as the hand of the Lord preſſed on him. They ſhould ſacrifice in the Land, *Exod.* 8,26. or, they ſhould go out, ſo none but the Men might go, leaving the Women and Children, *chap.* 10. 9, 10, 11. or, They ſhould all go, but they ſhould leave the Flocks and Herds, *chap.* 10. 24. But what is the reſolution of *Moſes*? *There ſhall not an hoof be left behind, for thereof muſt we take to ſerve the Lord our God: and we know not with what we muſt ſerve the Lord until we come thither*, v. 26. Shall *Moſes* and *Iſrael* ſtand on their Points to endure Bondage rather than leave an Hoof behind? And ſhall we make ſuch terms to have Locks and Fetters upon our Hands and Feet from ſerving Chriſt for time to come, ſeeing we little know what he may require of us to ſerve him withal? God forbid. Can true *Iſraelites* endure to have Deliverance upon ſuch terms, as the thruſting out their right eyes, and laying it for a reproach on all *Iſrael*? Would not all the Lords people lift up their voices and weep if it ſhould be ſo? 1 *Sam.* 11.2,4.

Object. *What would you have me do? I am now (perhaps) a Priſoner. They will give me liberty ſo I will engage to Preach no more, to Meet no more, &c. If they keep me a Priſoner, I cannot Meet, or Preach,*

&c. And if I promiſe I will not, I ſhall be but in the ſame capacity I am in now, and am likely to be ſtill in?

Anſw. This way of reaſoning is very enſnaring; for, (firſt) if thou art in bonds, thy great intereſt lies in this, in *giving diligence that the Word of God is not bound*, 2 Tim. 2. 9. but rather as *Paul* ſaith, *Phil.* 1. 12. That the things that fall out of this kind, *fall out rather to the furtherance of the Goſpel.* Such therefore as ſeek and get freedom on terms that leave the Word obſtructed in that free paſſage wherein it ſhould run and be glorified, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 1. they do but get the *fetters* off from their own feet, and ſet them upon the Word of God, which is but Deliverance with a miſchief. (2) Thy liberty obtained in ſuch a way, and on ſuch reaſonings, is but a liberty and freedom to ſerve thy ſelf, feed and ſatisfie thy ſelf and luſts as a man, not to ſerve Chriſt, or do any thing for thy God as a Chriſtian man. (3) If thou art violently reſtrained by them, the ſin of any omiſſion of Duty and Service, lies at their door; and to their peril be it when the King ſhall demand the reaſon of thy want of ſervice: but when thou acceptest of thoſe terms, thou becameſt acceſſary with them, art in conjunction with them, its thy ſin as much, if not more than theirs; *they think they do God good ſervice.* (4) If thou art only bound by the hands of Violence, the Lord looks on thee, and reckons thee as his free man, free in Spirit, thou reſerveſt the dominion of that for God. Thou liveſt not, dyeſt not as a Fool dieth, but as a man falleth before wicked men, 2 *Sam.* 3. 33, 34.

Object.

Object. *Now there is little opportunity to do the Lord any ſuch ſervice, but if ever an opportunity preſent, I hope to be as ready as another: may not ſuch obligations be enervated, repented of, and a ſoul diſobliged from them?*

Anſw. It hath been, and is ſtill the crying ſin of this day, and of the years paſt, That perſons have thought it a very ſmall matter, to make and break theſe kind of Engagements, according as intereſt preſents them with an opportunity; the iniquity and provocation whereof I ſhall only attempt to open in one Scripture, *Ezek.* 17. 12, 13, to *verſ.* 20. where God expoſtulates the caſe with the rebellious Houſe of *Judah*. They and the King of *Babylon* make a Covenant, and there is for ratification of it the Oath of God added: The King of *Babylons* deſign was to make the Kingdom baſe, that it might not lift up its ſelf; and in this exigency they make a Covenant. The queſtion is put, Whether their taking an opportunity to ſhake off this yoke and break this Covenant, might not be ſucceeded with proſperity? This conſequence the Lord diſclaims with the higheſt indignation, and that, *becauſe of the Oath of God*, the quarrel and controverſie of that Oath and Covenant ſhould be required ſeverely at the hands of ſuch a treacherous people. — If thy hand have been lifted up in Truth, Righteouſneſs, and Judgement already, then take care how thou retract that, and to whom thou lift it up the ſecond time, leſt it prove a double provocation.

5. If I cannot come at the good of Deliverance, but I muſt intrench upon the Name, Honour, and Glory of God, which he hath lifted up in the

World, I may not touch with that Deliverance. There are ſome wayes and works of God wherein he hath more immediately and eminently in ſome generations, concerned his Name than in others, or than ever it was before. God went to make him a Name of Greatneſs and Terribleneſs, by Redeeming *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, and driving the Nations out of *Canaan*, 1 Chron. 17.21. Iſa. 63. 12, 14. So by bringing *Judah* out of *Babylon*; and will do, by bringing his *Sion* from under *Antichriſt*. Toward the later whereof, he hath made very glorious advances in our dayes, and we have ſung his praiſe in them, ſo as it may be ſaid of his Holy People at this day, as of *Iſrael* of old, *Deut.* 4. 32, 33, 34. *And all this he hath done to get himſelf a glorious Name:* Our zeal for which, and love to which, is now brought to tryal, whether we will yea or nay, deny his Name? A faithful adhering to which, though by a people that have but little ſtrength, is very acceptable to the Lord, *Rev.* 3.8,9,10. And he will do great things for ſuch in times and hours of temptation. If therefore God be at this day ſo tender of his Name, as he is, that he will not give his glory to another, we ought to be upon his ſide in this deſign; and eſpecially when this Name of his comes to be ſpoken about, all our Deliverances ought to be brought to this teſt, if they may be had with a ſaving to this Name they are welcome, otherwayes they may not be accepted.

Object. *But whatſoever we can ſay was done in our dayes of that kind, the Lord now appears plucking it down again, leads that ſtrength into captivity, & gives that glory into the enemies hand, beſtowes the marks of favour upon the other party, who thrive and proſper;*

and

and being advanced to the capacity we ſee them, we do but follow Providence in joyning there?

Anſw. 1. The beſt of thy plea is, God is angry with his People, & hath a great Controverſie with them, which he pleads with deep and bitter ſtrokes, and thou wilt be on his ſide, angry with them too, and plead againſt them. In ſo doing thou mayeſt be right and ſafe; but I muſt tell thee thou haſt very much reaſon to take heed both of thy ſtanding, and frame of ſpirit, leſt his indignation take place on thee for being out of thy place; the Lord is very jealous againſt ſuch as offer their ſervice to be the executioners of his rebukes upon his heritage, *Zech.* 1. 15. *Pſal.* 69. 26. *Iſa.* 47. 6. that was a ſore word, *Obadiah* verſ. 11. *For thy violence againſt thy Brother, ſhame ſhall cover thee, in the day that thou ſtoodeſt on the Other ſide — thou ſhouldeſt not have looked on the day of thy Brother, &c.* The Lord takes ſpecial notice on what ſide men ſtand, when he is dealing with his own Children for their folly. (2) Moreover the Lord's rebuke is not againſt his People for their Principle and teſtimony, but for their unſutableneſs to that Teſtimony and Principle of theirs which they profeſſed. And now he is come in the way of this tryal to ſee whether we will cleave to him with our whole heart, and with our whole ſoul; what remnant they be who will cleave to him in principles of Righteouſneſs, of Holineſs, of Purity, of Godlineſs, of Goſpel-worſhip, of an Heavenly Converſation, and underneath the feet of theſe ſubject their intereſt of Eaſe, Reſt, Liberty, Eſtates, Limbs, Lives; his Voice is therefore now, in this reſpect, who is upon the Lord's ſide? *Pſal.* 94. 16.

Here its an exceeding mercy indeed to have obtained mercy to be faithful; not to deny his Name whatever it coſts.

6. Deliverance is then to be dreaded, not accepted, when I cannot come at the good of Deliverance, without giving juſt occaſion of ſtumbling to many *to fall*, and of grief and affliction to the bonds of many *that ſtand*. Precious in the ſight of the Lord are the lives and ſouls of the pooreſt Saints, and ought to be tender to us, that we do nothing whereby they be ſtumbled, offended, or made weak, much leſs deſtroyed for whom Chriſt died. *Aſaphs* firſt conviction of his extravagancy, *Pſal.*73.15. was, if he ſhould ſpeak thus, he ſhould offend againſt the generation of Gods Children. As he was tender, ſo the Lord is very jealous of this, *Ezek.*13.22. how *the heart of the Righteous be made ſad, whom God hath not made ſad, and the hands of the wicked ſtrengthned, that they ſhould not return from their wicked way, &c.* I confeſs there is a great latitude of Liberty wherein a Chriſtian may walk in lawful things, among which the obtaining Deliverance is a branch of priviledge: but if it be attempted, as by many 'tis, to the offending, wounding, deſtroying of many of Chriſt's little ones; a Milſtone hung about the neck, &c. is more tolerable than the conſequence of ſuch attainments.

Object. But ſay ſome, *The different tempers and diſtempers of people and of profeſſors is become ſuch, that there is no walking by this rule, in this caſe; for there are divers Saints will come and tell me, if I do ſuch or ſuch a thing, I ſhall ſin and wound them, encourage others to follow me to their hurt.* Others (no way inferiour

inferiour to the former in Wisdom, Parts, Piety) tell me, *If I do not such a thing, I ruine my family, am worse than an Infidel, run them as well as my self upon danger, and temptations, so that in my omission and refusal, I shall grieve and offend them, and what may I do in this case, when I am likely to offend Saints either way?*

Answ. When this is really so, it is a strait case, though I think somewhat rare in all the straitning circumstances in the Objection: but put the case it be so; this is a ruled case with me, If I can bring the matter into this plain evidence, that in my doing it, I shall really endanger the one party to sin; and in my not doing it, I shall but endanger the other party to suffer: being necessitated to a choice, I am to take that course whereby I may prevent the ones sinning, though I cannot prevent but really endanger the others suffering. For as I may not commit any sin my self to prevent my own suffering, so I may not run any one upon sin, to prevent another from suffering; for betwixt sin and suffering there is no comparison. Indeed I may not chuse any sin or suffering in my self, or another, if it may righteously be avoided; but when I am driven to this *Dilemma*, though it be an hard yet it is a clear case what I am to do, and cast the care of the issue upon the Lord. We have a very high instance of this in the case of *Haman* and *Mordecai*, Esth. 3. throughout. You have *Haman* advanced by the King to exceeding dignity, and a Royal Commandment, that all should bow and do him reverence; a small matter, just, and requisite (one would think) for *Mordecai*, to have done as well as others, rather than break the Kings Com-

mand,

mandment, incur *Hamans* burning rage, and revenge, and endanger the deſtruction of the whole people of *Iſrael*; which yet he adventures to do, and to ſtand in, and cannot be by fair means or foul, removed from it. What would have been ſaid of him now (think you) to have run ſo many thouſands, both Eſtates and Lives, upon immediate hazard, rather than to yield a Civil token of ſubjection to ſuch a Magiſtrate? What can be conceived to juſtifie him? Why, his Juſtification lies in the due conſideration of the two denominations theſe two men have, in the *firſt* and *fourth verſes*. What was *Mordecai?* why he was a Jew; and he told them that enquired about the reaſons of his contempt, *That he was a Jew. verſ.*4. a Perſon of no mean Quality, Pedigree, and Accompt; ſee *Eſth.*2.5. *Ezra.*2.2. *Neh.*7.7. And what was *Haman?* Why (*verſ.*1.) he was the Son of *Amadatha* the Agagite. What was *Agag* (whence *Haman* deſcended) He was the King of *Amalek*, the relict of that deſtruction about which God had not only expreſly determined, *Exod.* 17. 14, 16. *Numb.* 24. 20. *Deut.*25.17,18,19. but given a very ſtrict charge to *Saul* to make utter riddance of him from under Heaven, 1 *Sam.*15.2,3. Now as this indiſpenſible Commandment lay for the deſtruction of *Amalek* in general, and ſuch indignation was provoked for ſparing *Agag* in particular in that Chapter: So had the Lord expreſly determined, *Numb.*24.7. *His King ſhould be higher than* Agag, *and his Kingdom ſhould be advanced.* This Controverſie was to ſtand unreconcileable from generation to generation (*Exod.*17.16.) nay, when *Iſrael* was at the loweſt, and the branch of

David

David as a root out of a dry ground, as it was in that day (they being in Captivity) yet was there preſerved a Root againſt *Amalek*, according to *Judg.*5.14. This wicked *Haman* was the *Jews* enemy, *Eſth.*3.10. & 7.6. the wretched root of enmity abode in him, that he derived from the ſtock of *Amalek*. Unto him in this character, ſpirit, and capacity, faithful *Mordecai* cannot bow, he remembers the Lords Controverſie, Prophecy, Providences formerly againſt *Amalek*, and hence he cannot bow or yield in the leaſt, whatever it coſt; the iſſue, as well as the intereſt of this Controverſie, was not unknown to his Wiſe-men and Wife, before the final deciſion of it, *Chap.*6.13. *If* Mordecai *be of the Seed of the* Jews, *before whom thou haſt begun to fall, thou ſhalt not prevail againſt him, but ſhalt ſurely fall before him.* Mark, here is an Intereſt againſt which God had a ſtated Controverſie, yet in one of the Branches of its Royal-line in a Riſing way, the not bowing and yielding to which, is the high-way to endanger preſently the Lives and Eſtates of all the *Iſrael* of God: yet, being *Mordecai* hath that foundation to ſtand upon, and is as the Lord's Root againſt *Amalek*, its ſafer (he judgeth) to adventure the loſing all that could be loſt, in a way of ſuffering, both his own and others, than betray the Lord's Intereſt; cloſe up thus the Lord's Controverſie, ſtep aſide from the Lord's Precepts, and make invalid the Lord's Promiſes; and by his publick example, encourage and involve others in the like iniquities. The Conſequences of this faithful abiding with God, is well known: The accommodating it, is left to ſerious conſideration. This Point in hand ſtands clearly witneſſed

to

to in it: When the ſufferings only of Saints lye endangered if I take one way, and their ſinning be endangered if I take the other; I am to reſiſt to blood, ſtriving againſt ſin, much more to bonds, or any other tortures or ſufferings. I do not deny but the caſe above, had many extraordinary circumſtances clothing it, but yet many excellent noble leſſons may be ſafely deduced.

I ſhall, from the whole of what hath been delivered under this head of Doctrine, draw a few *Inferences*, and proceed.

1. If in ſo many caſes Saints are not to accept Deliverance, but its the intereſt and excellency of their Faith rather to endure tortures: Then I beſeech you to be very tender how you judge others, for that upon tryals they do not accept of Deliverance, on ſuch terms as may ſeem very plain and eaſie unto you. Its the ordinary cenſure of ſome, *This is but their humour, and ſelf-willedneſs, becauſe they would ſeem to be ſomething, &c.* I ſay, though you cannot make a judgment upon what bottom ſuch a Chriſtian ſtands in not accepting Deliverance, yet do not preſently conclude againſt him; it may be he hath more reaſon to refuſe Deliverance than it is ſafe for him to expreſs unto others, in an age when men are *made offenders* and deſtroyed *for a word*; leave him to the Lord, and charitably ſuppoſe he hath a Conſcience to God-ward in what he doth; and though it be miſguided in this matter, yet its the beſt he hath, and he is bound to make much of it; *Do not judge another man's Servant, to his own Maſter he ſtands or falls.*

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2. I would upon the Promiſes further beſeech you, That ſince there are ſo many caſes in which its dangerous (however it may ſeem pleaſant) to accept Deliverance, you would give diligence that when theſe ſoul-ſhaking tryals are ready to beſet you, and ſet upon you, you may not be taken in a way of ſurprize: the greateſt miſchief Satan doth to ſouls in this kind is, when he frights them into Deliverance, and eſcape, ere ever their ſpirits are recovered to a juſt capacity to weigh and make a ſolid judgment what is beſt to be done in the caſe, all things conſidered. They are ready to be taken with that way of reaſoning that *Eſau* was, *Gen.* 25. 32. *Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit ſhall this Birth-right do to me?* So they: Behold! I am at the point to be impriſoned, to be baniſhed, to be tortured: and what good then can this Profeſſion do to me? And ſo being ſurprized with the fright, ſell their Birth-right for a little meat, or ſomething like it which periſheth with the uſing of it. In order to the preventing which miſchief, I beſeech you Conſider:

1. Firſt, That this Tryal whereupon the Lord brings you, perhaps is the principal, if not the only opportunity in which you may ever have the advantage to ſpeak a word on Gods behalf, and bear thus witneſs for him as long as you live; *What ſhall we do for our Siſter in the day that ſhe is ſpoken for?* was a ſeaſonable queſtion, *Cant.* 8. 8. There is a day when God is to be ſpoken for, Chriſt to be ſpoken for, Truth to be ſpoken for, which being elapſed, the things of this our peace may be hid from our eyes. Oh! therefore, while you have this opportunity, omit not to do good, to improve it to the utmoſt.

2dly.

2dly. Conſider, A little ground loſt, at ſuch a Seaſon, and in ſuch a Teſtimony, is hardly recovered again; where you find one Chriſtian ſoundly recovers it, you may obſerve abundance decline and grow weak in making any future reſiſtance to temptations. We are called to follow the Lord as Virgins: now where the enemy hath prevailed once to violate the chaſtity of ſuch, to bruiſe the teats of their virginity, they afterward grow weak to make oppoſition to attempts of the like nature, *Ezek.* 16.30. *How weak is thy heart, ſeeing thou doeſt all theſe things, the work of an imperious whoriſh woman?* A back-ſliding Profeſſor is like a whoriſh woman, who having loſt her chaſtity, though ſhe gets an imperious forehead, yet hath a weak heart; though ſhe is bold to aſſert her chaſtity, yet ſhe is weak to preſerve it.

3dly. Conſider, How eaſie and frequent it is with the Lord to make that deliverance which you buy ſo dear, become a real burden to you. How many wayes hath he to make your liberty a burden, by freſh vexations ſuch meet withal, your Trade (for the ſake of which you adventure ſuch ſtrange attempts) a real burden, by Loſſes, Deadneſs, Croſſes in it? Your very Lives a burden, by ſickneſs, and divers other vanities and vexations of ſpirit? And who would buy that too dear, that is lyable to ſo many cauſualties? Take heed that Satan doth not at ſuch ſurprizals make a market upon you; for you are not ignorant of his enterprizes.

3. But leaving this Point, let us proceed to the Third Head, or manner of our conſidering Deliverance, and that is, as Deliverance ſtands compared with, and undervalued by the preference of a better

better Reſurrection, when the Torturers tender of Deliverence, and the Comforters tender of a better Reſurrection come in competition: though both are good in themſelves, yet Faith helps to make the choice of the Reſurrection, as being the better incomparably, notwithſtanding any inconveniencies on this ſide it.

Hence the Third Suppoſition in the general Doctrine is, ☞ *That a Believing Proſpect into the Reſurrection, is of mighty force to carry a Chriſtian through any Tortures, and to reject any unworthy tenders of Deliverance.*

Faith tranſmitting the eye upon Eternity, and fixing the expectation there upon the conſequences of the bleſſed coming of the King, ſets all at rights, turns the Scales toward the advantage of the Glory and Intereſt of God, as worthy to be adhered to: in compariſon of which Reſurrection, Torments are but a flea-biting, and Tenders of Deliverance as a painted feather. The Emphaſis lies in the term [*Better.*] Faith ſatisfies, that the ſoul in this hath choſen the *better part*, not only better than Suffering, for ſo may Deliverance ſeem to be: But Better upon all accompts whatſoever, than the beſt and faireſt offer, that can poſſibly be made to defloure, and intice from following after God. Earth may be good, Deliverance unto it, and the Accommodations in it, may be good; but when they are at the beſt, Chriſt is better, Heaven is better: to have Chriſt with us in Sufferings, with Peace, Joy and Satisfaction here; and to be ever with Chriſt in the Reſurrection of the Juſt, this is tranſcendently beſt of all. The clearing this Point would be attempted (did not time prevent) in conſider-

conſidering particularly, theſe Three things:

1. Deliverance at the beſt, with its power to allure us unto the choice of it [for its not it, when we are under offence at it, but Deliverance with its full allowance, that is brought undervalue in this choice.]

2. The Reſurrection conſidered at the worſt, and as it lay obvious to Objections (eſpecially to them in that day) yet forcible and effectual to perſwade.

3. The actings and excellency of Faith, in ſingling out, and fixing the ſouls choice herein, notwithſtanding the abſence of any other Reaſonings or Arguments to turn the Scale, other than theſe drawn ſingly from the Concerns of this Reſurrection.

Theſe can be but briefly touched at preſent, as for the former, thus; —

Firſt, Deliverance here offered (as was ſhewed before) is Deliverance with all its Accompliſhments and Accommodations, that we can imagine to ſet it off admirable, and apt to take with a tortured, tempted, poor Creature; (I mean in an humane dreſs) all that the Adverſary is capable of adding to it, to give it a gloſs, that may effectually anſwer his ends. Now there are Two things which do tend much this way, and are apt to be very taking to a ſenſual or watchleſs eye. (1) The *Pleaſantneſs*. (2) The *Preſentneſs* of Deliverance, as I may expreſs it.

(1) Its one main part of the Tempters buſineſs to ſet off, as he can, the taking *Pleaſantneſs* of Deliverance; he baited his Hook *to Chriſt* with all the Kingdoms of the World and the glory of them, and

and that in a moment of time, with this offer, *All this Power will I give thee, and the Glory of them, Luke* 4.5,6. To *Aſaph*, with a condition of men that have no bands in death, their ſtrength firm, are not in trouble as other men, nor plagued as other men; eyes ſtanding out with fatneſs, they have more than heart could wiſh. —Therefore God's People often turn in hither, *Pſal. 73. beginning.* The firſt *temptation* was by a Tree good for food, pleaſant to the eye, and to be deſired to make one wiſe, *Gen.*3.6. He never wants high and fair profers to make up a *temptation* effectual to allure: You ſhall buy and ſell, be free of the great City, that made rich all her Merchants (*Rev.*18.10, to 19.) ſo you will receive the mark in the forehead, or right hand; you may admit it ſecretly, if you will not openly, *chap.*13.16,17.

(2) The Tempter alſo inſiſts much, and gains much advantage by repreſenting and impoſing the *Preſentneſs* of Deliverance; you ſhall have this preſently. The Reſurrection you ſpeak of, is a great way off, a long time to come; and will you tarry till the Heavens be no more for ſuch a thing, and in mean time overlook that Deliverance which is in hand? *A Bird in Hand is worth two in the Wood. Better is the ſight of the eyes, than the wandring of the deſire*, Eccleſ. 6. 9. This offer of things that are ſeen, hath great prevalency with a ſoul who lives more by Sence than by Faith; this was the ſnare of *Demas*, he forſook that way of the Lord, having loved the *preſent* world, 2 *Tim.*4.10. To be delivered from the *preſent world*, (*Gal.*1.4.) is an extraordinary ſalvation, it being ſo apt to take with us when we begin to grow weary, and

can wait on the Lord no longer; and reckon (as was noted of *Esau*) *I am at the point of Death, and what good can this Birth-right* (this hope of a Resurrection, and another World to come) *do to me?* Give me Deliverance, will such a one say, or I die. Thus the Captive Exile hasteth, lest he die in the Pit, and his bread should fail. —

Secondly, But consider we the Resurrection; and here if we will improve the thoughts of it to advantage, we should admit to our thoughts about it those Objections that may make it seem less taking; there are Three of them that we may easily conjecture might rationally arise in the spirits of these poor tempted tortured ones, against their adhering to the Resurrection in the neglect of present Deliverance.

1. About the very truth of this Notion of the Resurrection, there is the appearance of a very great impossibility, Flesh and Blood, Sence and Reason object. *How can these things be? If a man die can he live again? Of all living there is hope; a living Dog is better than a dead Lyon; the living know that they shall die, but the dead know nothing at all*, *Eccles.* 9. 4, 5.

These are the Reasonings of a rational mind that admits only of humane demonstration. When *Paul* was making his Defence before *Agrippa*, one who was expert in all Customs and Questions among the *Jews*, yet reasons on this Supposition, That it was thought a thing incredible with them that God should raise the dead, *Acts* 26. 8. with *vers.* 3. If the question be put, *Can these dry bones live?* Sense, Reason, Learning, hath no better than this

this astonished answer, *Lord, thou knowest*, Ezek. 37. 3. This now is a great disadvantage unto a rational choice, as our case is. But here steps in *Faith*, which acts upon dead things, a dead Womb in *Sarah*, dead Loins in *Abraham*, a Sacrificed *Isaac*, a Crucified *Christ*, the slaughtered *Witnesses*, a betrayed *Cause*, are subjects proper to a living *Faith* to exercise its self upon, when it hath a word of Promise; *Faith* thinks it not incredible that God should raise the dead; it lives upon that great Power that raised *Jesus* from the dead: So that though the bones be scattered about the Graves mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth Wood, *Psal.* 141. 7. though the bodies of the Saints are given to be meat to the Fowls of the Heaven, and their flesh to the Beasts of the Earth, their Blood shed like water, and there be none to bury them, *Psal.*79.2,3. though Limb be torn from Limb, and Quarter set at the greatest distance from Quarter; though the fire devours the Bowels, and the Dogs lick the Blood, yet *Faith* is not hereby lost in a certainty of Conclusion; This is Dust in Covenant with the God of *Abraham*, of *Isaac*, & *Jacob*; and though it be dead to us, yet all live to him, *Luke* 20.37,38.

2. If there should be a yielding to the possibility of it, yet it might be objected, The demonstration of the Point, and its determination in Scripture-evidence, was not apparent and manifest in that day; Life and Immortality being reserved to be brought to light through the Gospel, 2 *Tim.* 1. 10. and the way into the Holiest of all, being not yet made manifest, while as the first Tabernacle was yet standing, *Heb.* 9. 8. Not but that there

was a ſufficient Teſtimony in the Scriptures of *Moſes* and the Prophets to this Truth, to guide Believers in the Hope of Glory; but ſo far was there a Vail on this, as well as other Truths, that the *Sadducees*, a Sect of no mean Repute and Authority in the *Jewiſh Church*, not only queſtioned, but utterly denyed any ſuch thing to be founded in the Old Teſtament at all, *Mat.* 22. 23. *Acts* 23. 8. Nay, under the clear manifeſtations of this Truth in the Teſtimony of Chriſt and the Apoſtles in the New Teſtament, you ſee a generation who affirmed, That *the Reſurrection is paſt already, and overthrew the Faith of ſome*; againſt whom the Apoſtle diſputes at large, 1 *Cor.* 15. Nay, notwithſtanding all this, we ſee in all Ages there have been ſome, who by weakning the Authority of the Scriptures in geneeal, or by a lawleſs, wanton allegorizing the Scriptures that refer to this and other precious Truths in particular, do ſatisfie their reaſon in rejecting the truth of the Lord's Teſtimony herein. If it may be ſuppoſed that theſe ſouls, of whom the Text makes report, ſhould be aſſaulted with any part of this *temptation*, about the obſcurity of the revelation of this Doctrine in the Scriptures, it muſt needs magnifie the excellency of their Faith, that conquered this diſadvantage, and through this cloud alſo conclude, the preferency of the Reſurrection to their tendered Deliverance.

3. But ſuppoſing the poſſibility and probability of this Doctrine be acknowledged to have been undoubted to them, yet this might remain a very conſiderable *remora* in their way; it was a thing a great while to come; many thouſand years have paſſed

passed since the assertion of it, and yet no appearance of it; and many thousand years may yet be ere it take place; as was their reasoning, *Ezek.* 12. 27. and as the Scoffers of the last dayes object, 2 *Pet.* 3. 4 Now (as was said) when against this is objected, the *Presentness* of the Worlds offer, you shall have Deliverance presently, Liberty presently, Ease presently; and will you tarry till Doomsday for a Resurrection? The conquest of this objection must needs bespeak the great power of Faith in the present choice.

Thirdly, Now consider we the actings of Faith, in its interposition to turn the scale upon the single proffer of the Resurrection, and for the sake of it to slight the terror; nay, to imbrace the sentence of a Gibbet, a Stake, a Rack, an Ax, an Halter, a Transportation into Exile; surely we may conclude a man hath need deal upon notable principles that is thus furnished. Now *Faith* helps by being the evidence of things that are not seen, as,

1. By annihilating, and rendring very empty and vain all those things that can be offered in competition with the Resurrection.

2. By realizing, and rendering very substantial and precious, all those things that are promised in, and accompany the Resurrection. Briefly thus; ——

First, A discovery is made by believing, of the invalidity to an Heavenly mind, and its divine reasonings of all that can possibly be offered by the Tempter, or his Torturers to debauch; Consider them either (1) in their single nature as they all are subjected through the fall to vanity. How

many have this Deliverance, and are curſed with it, croſt with it, blaſted in it, unable to keep it, or comfort themſelves under it? Take Deliverance alone, and what is it? *A Cruſt for a Dog* (ſaith *Luther* of the Turkiſh Empire) a feaſt too empty to ſatisfie an immortal ſoul. Wilt thou ſet thy eyes on that which is not? The whole Book of *Eccleſiaſtes* practically opened, is the effect of believing in a gracious heart, *Vanity of Vanities* (ſaith the Preacher, and ſo ſaith the Believer) *Vanity of Vanities, all is vanity.* (2) Conſider we them in conjunction with the ſin that buys them, by means whereof they receive the denomination of the pleaſures of ſin. And then whereas in the former reſpect they were at beſt *but vanity*, in this they are *vexation of ſpirit, an evil ſickneſs*; wherein many thruſt themſelves through with many ſorrows, drown themſelves in ruine and perdition; and in this ſence to be avoided and fled from as from a Serpent. (3) Conſider we them in their competition with Jeſus Chriſt, and as frequently they ſtand in oppoſition to him, and then they are very pernitious, muſt be hated, *Luke* 14. 26. elſe we cannot be his Diſciples.

Secondly, Faith makes a diſcovery of the Reſurruction, and gives ſatisfactory evidence about it, as that which hath weight to bear down all contrary objections; the way it takes is not to fill the imagination with ſpeculatory Notions, but to put it out of doubt, and quiet it in receiving the Teſtimony God hath given by his Son therein: And particularly (1) it gives evidence of a very full and ſatisfactory repairation of all thoſe breaches that all theſe tortures and ſufferings could make upon

upon their concerns therein. *They*, mentioned *Heb.*13.34. *took joyfully the ſpoiling of their Goods, knowing in themſelves they have in Heaven a better and an enduring ſubſtance.* Whatever Loſſes they ſuſtained in Stock or otherwiſe, it interrupted not their joy, they took it joyfully, the Reſurrection will pay for all. The like is true of the marks of the Lord Jeſus they now bear about in their bodies; now indeed they are the badges of loſs and infamy, but he accounts it is better to enter into Life blind and maimed, than to adventure Hell by ſaving them. At the Reſurrection of the Juſt, our vile bodies ſhall be made like unto the glorious body of our Lord. In point of the perfection of them, we know not what we ſhall be; only this we know, *That when he appeareth we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* (2) As it evidenceth a repair of loſſes thus ſuſtained; ſo it aſcertaineth a moſt abundant recompence, not of Debt but of Grace, when they that ſuffer with him ſhall receive the Crown of Life; for ſhame they ſhall receive double, and for confuſion they ſhall rejoyce in their portion. When this ſhall be remembred, *Ye are they who have continued with me in my Temptations, and I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me*, Luk.22.28,29. When for whatever hath been loſt or forſaken of this kind, there ſhall not only be made good the hundred-fold-promiſed, *Mat.* 19.29. in Peace, Joy, and Conſolation in Tribulation, but in that World to come Life everlaſting.

I ſhall draw the whole to a Concluſion in theſe Two or Three Inferences of Duty.

1. If all this (and a great deal more that might

be ſaid) hold true, touching the worth as well as the truth of the Reſurrection; Then would I beſeech you, that you do not ſell the Doctrine of it for a Song; do not be ſo eaſily baffled as many be out of the Faith and expectation of it, by a few Allegorical Notions, and plauſible evaſions of thoſe Scripture-Teſtimonies that give evidence to this Truth, in which is wrapt up ſo much of your ſtanding Conſolation when ever you are called by any manner of death to put off your Tabernacle, that your fleſh alſo ſhall reſt in Hope, and your vile body be changed into the likeneſs of Chriſt's glorious body: Whatever natural corruption, weakneſs, diſhonour it be ſown in, yet it ſhall be raiſed ſpiritual, in incorruption, power, glory, and be ever with the Lord.

2. Be intreated to give your ſelves more unto a ſearch and ſtudy of that bleſſed truth that concerns your Reſurrection, and the glory that ſhall follow; and be not ye eaſily ſtartled and offended at it by reaſon of the miſcarriages of ſome who have been Aſſertours of it, and been too forward to vent their raſh Conceptions touching divers things about it. You know the bleſſedneſs pronounced on them who reade and hear the things contained in that Book, wch moſt profeſſedly opens the Myſteries thereof, & yielded in the Viſion and and Revelation of it, ſuch ſtanding Conſolation unto *John*, to whom it was made known; and is a Doctrine of unſpeakable ſtrength and encouragement to the Lord's ſuffering, baniſhed, tortured ones, as many in this day have found it.

3. Draw forth the Improvement of your acknowledged conceptions and expectations of that day

day, in a way of Conſolation, rejoycing in Hope, and preſſing after the Light, Faith, Spirit, and Power of it, making ſure of your right to, and proper qualifications for that day. *Bleſſed and Holy are they that have a part in this firſt Reſurrection*; eſpecially improve it (as I ſaid) to Conſolation in all the loſſes you have ſuſtained, or are like to. This may ſeem one (amongſt others) to you, that a poor worm that ſpeaks, is to part (at preſent) with you, and it may be may ſee your face in the fleſh no more; doth this ſeem any way grievous? why, let us carry the caſe in our thoughts beyond the Grave, in a path of faithfulneſs; the Reſurrection will bring us together again, and make amends for all the loſs herein ſuſtained: Then we ſhall be ever with the Lord in that triumph, of which the ſtranger cannot intermeddle with the Joy. Comfort one another with theſe words, and the God of all Conſolation be with you. *Amen.*

FINIS.

THE EMBALMING OF A Dead Cauſe:

OR,

Chriſt's kind acceptance of ſincere (though weak) attempts, to preſerve a ſweet ſavour upon his Concerns in the World, under thoſe many deaths he is pleaſed to draw on them, until their promiſed Reſurrection.

Heb. 12.22. *But ye are come to Mount Sion, and unto the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jeruſalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels.*

Gen. 50.26. *So Joſeph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a Coffin in Egypt.*

Iſa. 26.19. *Thy dead men ſhall live, together with my dead body ſhall they ariſe. Awake and ſing ye that dwell in duſt: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the Earth ſhall caſt out the dead.*

Job 14.14. *If a man die, ſhall he live again? All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*

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THE EMBALMING OF A DEAD CAUSE.

Mark. 14. 8.

She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my Body to the burying.

THese words are part of Christs own Vindication of, and Apology for a very acceptable work of an Holy Woman, which nevertheless, through their great mistake, came under a very severe censure at the hands of the very Disciples of Christ themselves, *Mat.* 26. 6. who taking knowledge only of so much therein, as occured to their sense and carnal reason; admitted thereby not a little disquiet on their own spirits (*they had indignation*, vers. 4. *they murmured*, vers. 5.) and reflected much trouble upon hers, *vers.* 6. Even such high-raised and Heavenly actions of Saints, as have the most choicest esteem and acceptance with the Lord, may yet meet with very undue representations, and procure

cure very ſtrange reflections from the hands of o-thers truly dear to Chriſt. It ſhould therefore be no greater ſtrange thing to us to be judged by mans judgement, its well we ſtand or fall to another Maſter.

But ſo well was the integrity of her ſpirit, and the noble principles, and ſprings of this action known to Chriſt, and approved by him, that himſelf undertakes her defence (when perhaps her trouble at their hard meaſure, might ſtop her own mouth) and appears to plead her cauſe not only ſo far as to give a preſent check to their raſh concluſion, and a teſtimony to the goodneſs and acceptableneſs of her work: but withal takes order by an unalterable appointment for perpetuating the praiſe thereof, *verſ. 9. That where ever the Goſpel of Grace ſhould be Preached throughout the world, this that ſhe had done ſhould be declared for a Memorial of her.* Chriſtians under cloudy cenſures loſe nothing at laſt by leaving their cenſured ſelves and actings, to be vindicated by the Lord, to whom their integrity is known, and their cauſe committed, *Micah 7.9,10.*

Where ever the Doctrine of the Grace of Chriſt ſhould be proclaimed, this ſhould be produced as a lively inſtance, pattern, and example, to illuſtrate and confirm the power and prevalency thereof, in that it is of power to beget on ſo contemptible a weak veſſel as this poor Woman was, ſuch exceeding largeneſs, nobility, and ingenuity of ſpirit, as was beyond what the gallanteſt principles or endeavours of meer Man could arrive unto; and yet when the memorial hereof was to be mentioned, when the Goſpel ſhould be Preached either

ther to Nations abroad, or Generations to come, the principal intendment was not meerly to affix a mark of honour upon this individual person, or this single act (for her very name is hid both here, *vers.*3 and in *Mat.*26.6,7.) but to commend and advance the value of the principles and motives she went upon, to the encouragement and admonition of us, and others, upon whom the ends of the World are come, 1 *Cor.*10.11. *Rom.*15.4. I purpose not to mention, or stay upon the profitable deductions and inferences that would commend themselves from the coherence of the words, or matter round about them, intending but a present brief Comment on them.

In the words first read, we have a double Character of her noble spirit set forth.

First, In the extent of her act, *She hath done what she could.*

Secondly, In the intent of it, *She is come aforehand to anoint my body, &c.*

She hath done what she could] The word doth not meerly signifie that she had stretched her self to the utmost bounds of her estate and ability that way, to purchase so costly a confection as this was: for the greatness of the cost manifested it self to their offence, and it could no way mitigate their disquiet, to tell them how much she had expended in that respect; but hereby I understand Christ would have them know that a certain raisedness and greatness of spirit had acted her to the utmost, beyond the ordinary sphere of Beleevers, to devise and practise liberal notable things, so that she was not capable of being restrained and circumscribed within a narrow compass, she did what she

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she could, for she could not but do what she did.

She is come afore-hand to anoint.] By what impulse, or instinct of spirit, or with what distinct and evidence her understanding was assisted to receive the Doctrine of, and to make provision for the Funeral of her Lord, is not expresly mentioned. This is evident, that the Disciples generally were very dark, nay averse to notions of this kind, their expectations being very earthly & carnal, of being advanced with him, to some external Pomp and Glory, which his Death and Burial (so suddenly) was inconsistent with, by reason of their weakness and readiness to be offended, wherein the Lord was very tender of propounding the Doctrine, and distilling the Notions of his Death among them, whilst he was with them, *John* 16. 4. And what he delivered of this kind was hardly regarded or remembred till afterward, *John* 2.22. & 12.16. *Luke* 24.8. But this good Woman had early impressions made upon her heart of this blessed Truth, *She was afore-hand*, not only with the dispensation it self, but also with the most forward of the Disciples themselves, expecting it, and preparing for it.

To anoint my Body to the burying.] This was the manner of the *Jewes* to bury, *John* 19.40. especially where a reverend and honourable estimation, or singular affection were to be expressed. What might be extraordinary in her eye will hereafter be spoken to; only, towards the drawing this act of hers into a way of improvement for common use, it may not be amiss to consider the body of Christ, not only litterally, as was immediately intended in her act, but in a figurative acceptation, as other Scriptures

Scriptures may help, and warrant to conſider it, and our concerns about it. Thus, ſometimes by the Body of Chriſt is intended his Church and People, conſidered in their capacity of conflicting with many deaths and dangers, wherein they need, and depend upon him for aid and influence as their Head, 1 *Cor.*12.27. *Coloſ.* 1. 18, 24. *Eph.* 1. 23. The Body of Chriſt may alſo be applied to ſignifie ſometimes the whole *Oeconomy*, or adminiſtrations of the concerns of Chriſt in the World, for the peculiar good of his Church, eſpecially with reſpect to the Inſtitutions of the Goſpel, according as the Legal Inſtitutions, Ordinances, and Adminiſtrations of *Moſes* are called *the body of Moſes*, *Jude verſ.*9. compared with *Zech.*3.2. (where the conteſt was about the reſtitution of the Ordinances of the Lord, according to the Moſaical Inſtitution after the captivity) I ſay as the adminiſtrations of the Law, are called *the body of Moſes*, about which Satan had a conteſt then, ſo may (by juſt analogy) the Inſtitutions of the Goſpel, be called *the body of Chriſt*, againſt which Satan hath not only many conflicts with them that are anointed, and honoured to be a Royal Prieſthood, but in the infinite Wiſdom of God, and for the bringing about, and perfecting of his deſigns with greater glory, he hath deſigned manifeſt deaths and burials thereunto, that his Reſurrection-Power may be the more fully manifeſted, *Hoſ.*6.12. *Iſa.*26.19. *Rev.* 11 9, 10 11. Unto this his Body myſtically and figuratively conſidered, there being ſuch promiſes of a Reſurrection, there is alſo a ſpiritual embalming to be performed to it, compleat to the capacities of the Lords dear Children, all eſſayes and

offers hereunto in such largeness of heart, and preventing forwardness as was found in this Handmaid, have a very singular resentment and acceptance with the Lord, as shall hereafter be shewed, the which I hope may be treated of, and applied to our case, without stretching the Metaphor beyond the bounds of Scripture allowance, or digressing from the Spirits intendment concerning us in this place.

The words thus opened, afford us this Observation;

Doct. *That the Lord highly prizeth all vigorous attempts of his weakest Children, to preserve a sweet savour on the concerns of Jesus Christ, when they are exposed to death and burial.*

All *Nations* where the *Gospel* comes, must expressly take notice (for a pattern to all that shall believe) what a value and estemation Christ had of, and an apology for a censured act of a glorious soul, laid out early and nobly upon what concerned him, when under a sentence of *death and burial*, by the wise appointment of God (though to be executed by the hands of wicked men) so that if it might not be preserved from rage and scorn, yet should from stench and an evil savour, as much as lay in her, till its hoped-for Resurrection should set it above either what she could do for it, or the enemies against it; may we therefore in our capacities learn that lesson, *Go and do likewise*, Luke 10. 37. In handling this Point I shall not confine my self to any other method, than will offer it self in considering this lively instance and pattern to Believers in the Text; what was the peculiar excellency of her act indiscernable to good men

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that were ſtanders by, and wherein the acceptableneſs lay, and thence by way of proportion where the cogent reaſon and influence of it lyes, reſpecting us at this day.

Firſt, *Then we may conſider the inward ſprings and motives of her action that lay hid from ordinary obſervation, upon which her ſpirit was raiſed, and her endeavours extended to this degree mentioned in the Text.*

Secondly, *We may conſider the effect of theſe lively and ennobling principles, manifeſting its ſelf in the dimentions of her activity, or how it was ſaid of her, She did what ſhe could.*

Thirdly, *The buſineſs or affair it ſelf, about which ſhe was converſant; a very thankleſs office in the thoughts of thoſe that were lookers on, though they were the Diſciples of Chriſt, and men honourable in many other reſpects above her.*

Fourthly, *The eſtimation and acceptance that it finds with Chriſt, notwithſtanding the hard meaſure, and ſevere cenſures at the hands of men.*

I ſhall only ſpeak of all theſe in her, ſo, as is immediately applicable to our own caſe as we go along.

Firſt, As for the firſt of theſe; namely, *The hidden principles and ſprings of motion that were open to the Eyes of Chriſt with whom ſhe had to do, though miſtaken and miſs-judged by thoſe ſpectators.* Not to enlarge in that variety as the matter will bear, there are theſe two that offer themſelves by Chriſts diſcovery to our view and learning, as being needful indeed to all generous and noble actions that are wrought.

1. There lay at the bottom of her act, a lively faith, ſtrong and operative in this very matter; not only in receiving the diſcoveries of the death and burial of her Lord, whereunto the Diſciples were ſo generally unacquainted, but alſo the aſſurance of his ſpeedy Reſurrection, not only in the hints that himſelf had given of it, but alſo from the teſtimony that the Spirit had long ſince born, *Pſa.* 16. 10. that *he ſhould not ſee corruption in the grave*, his early witneſs whereunto we have, *John.* 2. 19. ſpeaking of the Temple of his body, *verſ.* 20. he ſaith, *Deſtroy this Temple, and in three dayes I will raiſe it up again:* Till he was riſen from the dead, this was not underſtood, or at leaſt not regarded and remembred (*verſ.* 22.) by the Diſciples; only ſuch and ſo great, apprehenſive and active, was the Faith of this good Woman, that ſhe receives the Doctrine of the Death and Burial, and quick Reſurrection from the Grave, of her dear Lord, and accordingly put her ſelf to this great Coſt, to ſignifie her complyance with the Promiſe, that he ſhould be buried, but not ſubjected to that corruption and putrefaction that attends that ſtate and condition of all others. We reade of the ſame *Mary*, *Joh.* 11. 2. in conjunction with her Siſter *Martha*, that when they were concerned in the burial of their Brother *Lazarus*, though there was no want but rather a ſuperabundance of love to him, living and dying: Chriſt *loved him*, Joh. 11. 35, 36. The Diſciples loved him, for they could be content to *go and die with him*, verſ. 16. His Siſters loved him to ſome exceſs, *verſ.* 31. and yet becauſe they had no expectation of his Reſurrection till the general Reſurrection, *verſ.* 24. they

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yielded him up to corruption, *Joh.* 17. 13, 14. so that when he had been dead four dayes, they concluded by this time he ſtinketh, *verſ.* 39. plainly ſhewing, that having not any faith, or fore-ſight of his return to life again ſo ſpeedily, they were at no coſt to embalm or perfume him againſt the ſtench of the Grave: but touching him whom God would raiſe up from the Grave not to ſee corruption, (wherein he tranſcended *David* who wrote that *Pſalm*, who having ſerved his generation, by the Will of God fell aſleep, was laid to his Fathers, and ſaw corruption) *Acts* 13. 34, to the 37. *Acts* 2. 24. to the 32. So true and ſtrong was her Faith herein, that ſhe deals not with him as with *Lazarus*, but afore-hand anoints him; and after he was in the Grave, again prepares another Confection of choice Embalm to perfect what might be lacking in the former, *Luke* 23. 56. *Mark* 16. 1. by which we may perceive that Faith (and ſuch as was not found in *Iſrael* ordinarily) lay at the bottom, and contributed aid and influence to all theſe great acts, and to this particularly wherein ſhe did what ſhe could for Chriſt. In juſt proportion hereunto, and on the ſame reaſon, is there need of Faith unfeigned, even Faith of the operation of God, to ingage ſouls to ſhew the like reſpect to the dying Cauſe, Intereſt, and Concernments of Jeſus Chriſt. Other men (and they alſo good men in the main) generally give it over, when ſuch diſtreſs and dying pangs come on it, till Chriſt come in the clouds of Glory, eſpecially where the grounds of their carnal and creaturely expectations of its revival do periſh and fail; none have ſuch engagements on them to lay out themſelves in preparing pro-

per imbalm for it, (of which mention is made hereafter) but they who have upon Gospel, and unmixed principles, an insight into, and a fore-sight of the design of God to give it an effectual reviving and Resurrection. The Faith then of this Resurrection is the needful principle to enlarge souls in such a case to do what they can for Christ's sake.

2dly. There was also in the bottom of this famous censured act of hers, fervent love in its lively operation; which is a large and defusive principle actuating souls upon very noble and unparallel'd exploits: its power and tendency to do so, commends its self in that ample character and description the Apostle gives of it, 1 *Cor.* 13. throughout. We have a very particular account of this principle brought forth to evidence by our Lord himself in an act of like cost and signification in the beginning of her way of following Jesus Christ, *Luk.* 7. 47. she there *v.* 37. *brings an Alabaster box of Oyntment, and with it anoints his feet* (having as the *chap.* shews) *washed them with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head.* This perfume, though it filled the house with its odour, yet was little understood, in its spring and principle, by them that sate by; but Jesus discovers it, *vers.* 47. Much was forgiven her, therefore *she loved much*; there was much love in her soul on work, and hence she layes out her self much upon her Lord; the love of Christ constrains her, and this, though it was to work so early, yet was not soon expended, but rather increased more and more; neither was it clouded, or abated by the expectation of an approaching death and funeral, but herein also puts

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out its ſelf, doth what it could towards his burial. Love makes her follow Chriſt not only in life but in death alſo, at his death to ſee the utmoſt of him, and do the utmoſt for him; compare *Luke* 23.27, 28,55,56. *chap.*24.1. & *Joh.*19.25. *chap.*20.1. & *Mark* 15. 40, 41, 47. you may perceive how Love led them from place to place, where Hazard might ſeem to way-lay them, and how unſatisfied they were with what others did tending this way: It was not the fine linnen *Joſeph* of *Arimathea* bought; it was not the newneſs of the Sepulchre hewed out of a Rock, in which never man lay, but fitted (it ſeems) for himſelf, *Mat.*27.59,60. nay, it was not the coſtly bed of Spices that *Nicodemus* laid him in, *John* 19. 29, 40. could ſatisfie them, but there muſt be more Spices bought to this end, *Mat.*16.1. Love is ſtrong as Death, *all the ſubſtance of a mans houſe will be contemned in the purſuit of it*, Cant.8.6,7. In like manner will it be where a ſoul or people have, from the love of Chriſt ſhed abroad in their hearts, a ſutable reflexion on the things of Chriſt, they being ſo apprehenſive of, and enamoured with the unalterable beauty of them, as theſe deaths and burials they meet withal do not alter the complexion of them, or abate of that dear love and ſtreaming affection to them; where it dieth they will die, and there will they be buried, nothing but death, nay death it ſelf will not be able to ſeparate 'twixt it and them, *Ruth* 1. 16,17. their own lives will not be dear to them for its ſake, *Phil.*2.30. *Acts* 15.26, *chap.*20.24. *Rev.*12.11.

Secondly, But let us proceed to conſider the Effect of theſe noble and innobling Principles of

Faith and Love in this affair in the Text; and also in the like on the Children of God at this day, where the work of Faith and Love with Power are produced; this commends it self in the extent of such acts as are performed, *she did what she could*; the commendable latitude of her spirit and endeavour, is a qualification well worthy a little enquiry, *When may a soul be said to have done what he could?* This and the like expressions, when they are applyed to set forth the Lords acceptance of a souls inlarged endeavours after, or for himself, do not signifie such a perfection of intention, or act as denotes perfection, which is not capable of increase or addition. The choicest Saints in their highest services and attainments this way, have found cause to cry out when they have done all that they could (at the best rate) yet *they are unprofitable servants*, Luke 17. 20. here is no place for Pride; *boasting is excluded by the Law of Faith*, *Rom.* 3.27.

The expression it self, however applied here to the commendation of this good Woman, yet implies some degrees of imperfection, and supposes the act in some respects to be short of absolute compleatness; As for Instance,

1. First, Though she did, and a Christian in his highest endeavours may have done what he could, yet may it be very short of having done *what he should*; there lies a very vast disproportion most times betwixt the perfection of the Law, and the utmost attainments of our act, such as may hide pride from us. *The Law of the Lord is perfect*, *Psal.* 19.7. *The Law is holy, and the Commandment holy, just, and good*, Rom. 7, 12. *The Law is spiritu-*

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al, verſ. 14. Indeed the Holy God, who is perfection it ſelf, can require nothing leſs than perfection for ſutable converſe with himſelf, *Mat.* 5. 48. Now between this perfect rule, and our imperfect act, what proportion can there be? I am carnal, ſold under ſin, our unſpeakable mercy lies in the new and living way of Gods own appointing, to preſent our ſelves and ſervices without ſpot, and without blemiſh to himſelf; not through the works of Righteouſneſs that we have wrought, but according to his own mercy and grace, whereby he makes us accepted in the Beloved.

2. Secondly, Though ſhe did, and a Chriſtian may be ſaid to *do what he could*; yet may there be, and many times there is a great ſhortneſs of *doing what he would*; as there is a diſproportion betwixt the Act and Law of which a poor Saint often complains; So is there betwixt his heart and hand, or (as Chriſt tenderly excuſeth it in his Diſciples) betwixt a Spirit that is willing, and the Fleſh that is weak, *Mat.*26.41. This is that the Apoſtle in the perſon of a poor Child of God complains, *Gal.*5.17. *We cannot do the things we would.* And *Rom.*7.15. to the 21. he finds a Law, *that when he would do good, evil is preſent.* Here now is a Chriſtians caſe, and the comfort concerning his act, when in all his apprehended ſhortneſs he finds a true gracious principle that delights in the Law of God, and preſſeth after a perfect union with, and a ſimilitude to it, groaning under, and conflicting to his utmoſt, with the contradictions of his infirm ſelf: where this is indeed and in truth obvious to the ſearching eye of Chriſt, he puts that bleſſed conſtruction on it, as to his Diſciples,

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the *Spirit indeed is willing, &c.* and the *Spirit teſtifieth*, 2 Cor. 8. 12. *That if there be firſt a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.* We ſerve not an hard Maſter that requires impoſſibilities, or expects beyond what he hath inabled for. He was judged a wicked and ſlothful Servant who had formed up that dreadful apprehenſion of a ſevere and cruel Maſter, *that reaped where he did not ſow, and gathered where he did not ſtraw*, Mat. 25. 24, 26. We have a very choice character of the diſpoſition of the Lord toward the off-ſpring of a willing mind, *Mark* 12. 42. to the end; a *Widow caſt into the treaſury two mites, that make a farthing*; a very ſmall and inconſiderable thing for the bulk of it, but being the product of a noble mind, and being extended to all that ever ſhe had, ſhe had done all what ſhe could, and this hath more acceptable entertainment and high commendation, than the many rich, who caſt in much of their abundance; they might have (comparatively to her) narrow ſpirits, though they had larger Purſſes. Hence was the commendation of the Churches of *Macedonia*, 2 *Cor.* 8. 2, 3. The deep poverty was matched with abounding riches of liberality, and then to their power, and beyond their power, they were willing of their own ſelves, and that was on this principle, *verſ.* 5. *Firſt they gave their own ſelves to the Lord, and to us by the will of God.* Souls yielded up to the Lord are the only generous ſpirits. The greatneſs of *Davids* joy, 1 *Chron.* 29. 14, 17, 18. was not ſo much for the greatneſs of the gift, but the willingneſs and uprightneſs of the heart (his own and others) that drew them out to do what they could

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for the House of God. But a little more particularly to attempt the resolution of this enquiry, *When a soul may be said to do what he can for Christ?*

1. First, We only then do what we can, when our spirits are bending and pressing toward an abundance and increase of act, according as we find the concernments of Christ about which we are conversant, requires or needs it, when as we see the distress of it increase, there grows upon us daily the care of these concerns, as we see the dayes are evil, wicked men worse and worse, and good men faint and weary, we then lay about us: What excellent thing do we, can we do, what do we more than others? Its the guise of many Professors, when they see Christs things go to the Wall (as we say) then to study Prudence and Wisdom, things good in themselves and in their place, but what do they signifie here but a meer politick contrivance how to preserve themselves by an abatement of their zeal, a temperament and qualification of the height and strickness of their Profession, the disposition of such tends this way, they will do as little as they can for Christ; They hope they may be saved if they meet not so often, nor so publick, nor so many as formerly, until at length their prudence will be to leave Christ alone, and repair to, and care for their own things. Nay it will be well if it turn not them aside to their crooked wayes, where God hath threatned to lead them forth with the workers of iniquity. Oh! where are those stirrings of spirit, when we see a City, a Nation wholly given to Idolatry, ingageing the more publick, frequent, and fervent appearing

pearing on Gods behalf, *Acts* 17. 16. That would have entred into the Theatre had he been suffered, *Acts* 19.13,31. That when the Decree is signed, of death without mercy, yet will keep on, not only Moral but Instituted Worship, to the utmost as aforetime, *Dan.*6.10. Rashness is not here pleaded for, but a zeal of God according to knowledge, and an holy fervency of spirit, serving the Lord, rejoycing in Hope, patient in Tribulation, continuing instant in Prayer, not forsaking the assembling our selves, though the manner of some be so; but exhort one another daily while it is day, provoking to Love and good Works, and that so much the more as we see the dayes be evil, and that day approacheth.

2. Secondly, We then do what we can when we make it our care and business to get our spirits and frames in all we do, raised on more noble principles than formerly; Gospel-principles are not revealed to us, or improved by us to their height at first; *The Righteousneß of God is revealed from Faith to Faith*, Rom.1.17. *Who walk by it from strength to strength*, Psal. 84. 7. *And are changed from glory to Glory*, 2 Cor.3.18. They that rest in, and trust to former Attainments and Experiences, will find them short of furnishing for new services of Sufferings: We have need, in these thorny and rocky paths, to have our shoos of iron and brass, and as the day is, so should our strength be, *Deut.* 33.25. We have need not only to prefer that requeſt, *Lord help our unbelief*; but also, *Lord increase our Faith.*

3. Thirdly, We do what we can then, when we improve our utmost interest in others; Saints and

and Sinners do ingage them to do what they can for Christ, when the distress is publick and extended to others generally; it should not satisfie our spirits, to narrow up our care and endeavour within the compass of our own things. It was a sad complaint, *All seek their own*, Phil. 2. 21. *Ye shall be scattered every one to his own*, Joh. 16. 32. This good Woman in the Text doth not satisfie her self, to make preparation for the embalming her dear Lord, but she is still found accompanying and ingaging others with her, *Luke* 23. 55, 56. & *chap.* 24. 10. Our forwardness and zeal, as was theirs of *Macedonia, which provoked very many*, 2 Cor. 9. 2. Alas! we are debtors to others, both Saints and Sinners, *Rom.* 1. 14, 15. And we should do as much as lies in us, to get them engaged to Christ as debtors to him, *chap.* 8. 12. Oh! did the worth and need of souls press more upon us, we should not be so private spirited as we seem to be, in respect of the dispersing the knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but should be more ready and less afraid to suffer all things for the Elects sake, that they (be they converted, or unconverted) may also obtain the Salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal Glory, 2 *Tim.* 2. 10. Oh! strive and study to do then what you can for Christ.

But here it may be requisite (ere we go further) to remove out of the way some of these deceits of Satan, whereby it is usual with him, to wrap many poor souls in their self-pleasing, but indeed to their detriment and undoing. How frequently doth it occur to our observation, That it is the pretention of many Professors who seek their ease in *Sion*, as well as of prophane persons, that though they do

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but little in the great & momentous matters of Eternity, yet they do what they can, they say; and if God accept the will for the deed, what need so much clamour to press them further? God is merciful, and why should we be so over-strict? will we have men do more than they can do? To free the Scripture from such corrupt glosses, and forewarn and deliver our selves from such insnaring temptations to ease and slumber, let us consider, That there are divers lusts of a very narrowing debasing tendency, within the Circles of which Satan attempts to bring poor souls in such dayes as these, and then shrinks and shrivels them upon all quarters, that they can do no excellent thing for Christ: Its a pitiful, its a dreadful thing to think to excuse our want of activity for God, upon the account of the straits that such temptations and iniquities lead us into; this is to cover with a covering that is not of the Spirit, that they may add sin to sin, which hath a woe pronounced on it, *Isa.* 30. 1. *chap.* 28. 20.

1. First, Satan doth endeavour what he can, to debase Souls, by filling them with carnal and unbelieving discouragements; this exceedingly disableth them from attempting any thing that is excellent. Its but little such a one can do; and its a pitiful account he can give of having done what he could; besides the common discouragement that ariseth from the persecution at the hands of wicked and ungodly men, the nature and tendency of which discouragement is frequently spoken unto (and I shall here pass by.) There are sundry that are apt to arise from good men themselves, in those censures, and miss-judgings that forward

souls

ſouls meet frequently in the way; and indeed they wound very deep: Had it been an enemy I could have born it, but it was thou, a man, my friend, and my familiar, &c. this cut deep. To apply only to what is in the Text, it was in the opening of the Context noted, that this grand work of hers that had ſuch an eminent commendation from Chriſt himſelf, as ſpringing from more Faith and Love than ordinary, fell yet under ſuch ſevere judging of the Diſciples themſelves, that it put the ſoul of this good woman into no ſmall trouble, *Mark* 14.6. *Let her alone, why trouble you her?* If we note a few of the offences they had at her, and objected againſt her; and by comparing them, we ſhall find that they have an exact ſimilitude to the *Cavils* at this day, ſtarted againſt the zealous Saints; under which it may quiet us to conſider that they are no new, and therefore ſhould be no ſtrange thing to us.

Cavil 1. There was no prudence uſed in this act, this ſeems to lye at the bottom of their ſenſe: wiſe men would not have done like this fooliſh Woman thought they, and at this they had indignation within themſelves, *verſ.* 4. and murmured againſt her; they were in a very pettiſh and impatient fit, as if they had ſaid, theſe unpreſidential actings will make a great noiſe to little profit, and at length ſpoyl all our prudential reaſonings. But now when they are improved, without due regard to the great intereſt of Chriſt, which ought to be laid and cared for in the firſt place; they prove great offences, not only to hinder ſuch contrivers themſelves, but to obſtruct others who were following Chriſt, and would be induced to follow him,

him, in more faithfulneſs, courage, and ſimplicity.

2dly. A breach of the law of Charity was pretended, the ſaving what ſhe had for her ſelf, the providing for the Poor, the ſupplying the Bag that Chriſt and his Diſciples lived upon, are ſuppoſed to be damnified and neglected hereby; Mercy ſhould have been preferred before zealous Sacrifice, &c. This is a uſual Objection, but there is more of *Judas* in it, than many that are offended by it are aware of, *John* 12. 6. Charity to bodies is pretended and advanced hereby frequently, above Love to Chriſt, and Charity to poor ſouls; they may ſtarve and die for want of a word of Life rather than ſuch loſſes muſt be ſuffered, ſuch hazzards run, ſuch coſt expended.

3dly. The thing was let run at waſte, was another Objection: Chriſt had no need of it, he was ſweet without it, and it was early enough for his funeral; her love was known without ſuch coſtly characters. Is not this a common way of reaſoning? Cannot the Goſpel be preached, the Cauſe of Chriſt ſecured, the Profeſſion of Chriſt upheld, unleſs you, ſuch poor weak ones as you, muſt make a noiſe, and run your ſelves and others upon ruine? you will be brought to beggary, your families ruined, then who muſt maintain you? Chriſt is in Glory, the everlaſting Goſpel will be preached in due time, in the midſt of Heaven the Elect will be called, and we that are Chriſts ſhall go to Glory, though you never make ſuch a-do. This is uſual, and apt to diſcourage; yet ought indeed to ſignifie little with gracious ſouls, who know that God doth ſet them for the defence of the Goſpel,

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as a pillar and ground of Truth, being his witneſſes againſt an adulterous generation, before whom ſhould they be aſhamed to profeſs him; the ſtones will cry out, and Chriſt would be aſhamed of them before his Father, and the holy Angels; but in this their faithful teſtimony, though friends ſcorn them, *Job* 16.20. yet by Prayer and Supplication, committing themſelves, and the pleading their cauſe to God, he will in due time plead their cauſe, and take up the controverſie as he did this poor Womans, when they that have judged them ſhall be aſhamed: This then is the firſt caution, Take heed that your hearts be not diſquieted by ſuch weakning diſcouragements from without, or within, leſt you be weary and faint in your minds, and thereby become diſabled from doing excellent things; think not that God will own and accept the reſult of ſuch wind-ſhaken-minds, and put this mark of favour on it, *She did what ſhe could.*

2. Secondly, Another ſinful Circle, within which Satan endeavours to conjure the ſpirits of many Profeſſors, and therein narroweth and ſtraiteneth them from any capacity to do what they might for Chriſt, is becauſe, the buſineſs, and ſpirit of the world, buſieth them with *Martha's* lot in many things, and then they think they have as good excuſe for their neglects as had ſhe, that doing as much as nothing, it muſt paſs, becauſe they do what they could. This is very lamentable, though frequently ſpoken to; it remains the guiſe of many Profeſſors, You know my buſineſs, what a deal of work I have, ſaith one: What a deal of care and deſtraction I have, ſaith another: Juſt as

they that were bidden to the Wedding-Supper; one had bought a Farm, and he must go and see it; another had bought a yoke of Oxen, and he must go and try them; another had married a Wife, and therefore he cannot come; all desire, Pray have me excused; all begin to make excuse with one consent, *Luke* 14. 18. You may reade one word, and see how badly such excuses will stand in the day of Christ, when not one of those that were bidden, shall taste of the Supper, *v.* 24. Oh! when mens hands are so full of business, and that most times greedily and unnecessarily sought after and pursued, that they cannot come; or at least their hearts so over-charged with the cares and pleasures of it, that they cannot come to any purpose; what doth this portend, but some swift stroak at hand on such a foolish people, to make up that lamentation? *Jer.* 9.

3. Thirdly, A third advantage Satan gets on many, by which he incloseth them within their spiritual benumednes, That they can do very little for God, and yet please themselves, is the old usual complaint (and that not without cause, though most times without sense) *of a bad dead cold heart*; when this seems to be the Religion of people, and that, from whence they get, or would get, not only excuse for their shortness, but a supposition that they are very humble, tender, ingenious, watchful, experimental, because they are so able and apt to tell of, and mourn over bad hearts; but hardly have I ever observed a people so inclinable to the deepest hypocrisie, and palpable neglect of any spiritual means to make them better; but as the door turns upon the hinges, so do they upon such com-

complaints, till what they artificially complain of at first, ſpring up at length as a Leproſie in their foreheads, to be ſeen and read of all men.

4. Fourthly, Another ſinful boundary wherein Satan wraps many, and diſableth them from doing any thing excellent for Chriſt (and then they think it well enough, if they do what they can within their compaſs) is, *The offence of Spirit that is apt to grow either at the ways or people of Chriſt, becauſe of the imperfection, they eſpie or ſuppoſe to be found in them:* But, *bleſſed is he that is not offended in Chriſt*, Mat. 11.6. Such diſtemper is dangerous, eſpecially in ſuch a dark ſtate of things, wherein that word ſeems verified, *Mat.* 26. 31. *This night ſhall ye be offended becauſe of me:* When Profeſſors are apt on all hands to ſtagger and fall into ſin, providences frown, opportunities of ſerving God cannot be come at without apparent hazard; ſpirits of people grow froward, apt to catch at advantages, glad to find excuſes, for departure from Relation to one another, hard to be reconciled; this is a bad ſeaſon for ſouls apt to ſtumble at the ſtumbling-ſtone: It begins with this, I am not free to meet, pray with, hear, joyn with ſuch a one (although all acts of Chriſtian duty for removing offence are neglected) and at length it appears, that of whom one is overcome, of him he is brought into bondage. Oh! ſtudy to preſerve the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace; Great peace have ſuch as love the Law of Chriſt, and nothing ſhall offend them.

5. Fifthly, To name no more at preſent, Satan gets hold on many, by pleaſing them under a ſlothful, ſinful abuſe of this notion, *We can do nothing,*

without we have help from the Lord: The which way of reckoning, as it is most commonly abused, hath this signification, All the idle neglects of Professors shall be as much (as they durst for modesty express themselves) fathered upon God. As the first way of Satan to cover the mans iniquity, was, *The Woman that thou gavest to be with me, she gave me, &c.* as if he had said, Hadst thou not given me a Woman, I had not sinned: the evil lies at least between us; but from all such excuses, God will be clear when he is judged.

This may serve as a taste, That its not every *I can do no more*, will serve the turn to excuse us, much less obtain for us this blessed Testimony Christ gave of this Woman, *She hath done what she could, she hath come aforehand to anoint my Body to the burial.* You may do more than you do all of you; nay, all things considered, must do more than this perfuming-work, of which I shall speak a little more particularly to shew its special nature, when I have first offered a few Considerations, shewing what engagements do lie on us, to do what we can for Christ, especially in this business of begetting a good savour on his things, in this day, when they are exposed, as much as may be, to stinking.

1. First, We are concerned to do what we can for Christ in this respect, because Christ hath done what he can to put a sweet savour upon us, when we stank to purpose; and doth not ingenuity require that we put the question the Prophet did, 2 *Kings* 4.13. *Thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee?* Or, as the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* 116. 12. *What shall I render to the Lord for all his*

his benefits? especially when he looks for nothing but our returning on his Name, the reflection of the sweet savour that he hath bestowed on us; let's but consider, what *great things* (of this kind) *he hath done for us*, 1 Sam. 12. 24. What were we when he cast a look of Love upon us? *Our navel was not cut, nor washed in water at all, not salted at all, nor swadled at all; cast out in the open field in our bloud, to the loathing of our person, troden under in bloud, &c.* *Ezek.* 16. 4, 5, 6. The stench of a soul in such a plight, may be read *Psal.* 38. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Well, to take away this evil savour, What hath Christ done in his Oblation? *Eph.* 5. 2. *Gave himself an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.* What doth he by constant Intercession? *Rev.* 8. 2, 3. stands with much Incense to offer up the persons and services of Saints, with acceptation, as a cloud of perfume ascending up before God out of his hand. All the offerings under the Law, both on the Brazen Altar for Sacrifice, and on the Golden Altar of Incense, are only figurative of what Christ doth this way; of all which its so frequently signified, Its an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour before the Lord. What doth he by bestowing his Spirit in the work of regeneration, but anoint with precious oyntment, *Ezek.* 16. 9, 10, *&c.* Or, as was the manner of Kings to prepare for their intimate Communion, *Esth.* 2. 12. What is the displaying his Name, but an oyntment poured out, *Cant.* 1. 3. What are his Appearances, smelling of Myrrhe, Aloes, and Cassia, *Psal.* 45. 8. and all to make us glad? Are not the kisses of his lips for that end perfumed, to that end, to convey to us a savour of them,

*Cant.*5.13. What, I say, doth all this speak, and signifie, if not an obligation that we should be a sweet savour to him, and leave a savour of him in every place, in such especially, as wherein his Name is or may be defamed, 2 *Cor.* 2. 14,15,16. Oh! let our garments be alwayes white, let our head and heart want no oyntment, to pour out as there is occasion, liberally and bountifully, when in any sense (as was said of the Colt, *Mark* 11.3.) *the Lord hath need of it.*

2dly. Its but reasonable we should do what we can to bring up a sweet savour upon the things of Christ, if we call to remembrance, *What cost and pains we have been at,* (to represent that savoury, which is pollution, and rottenness it self, I mean) *to beautifie and accommodate any stinking lust*; unto which we were bound, though in so doing, we *laboured in the very fire, and wearied our selves for very vanity*, Habak. 2.13. For who can bring up a clean sweet savour on that which is so unclean? Shall we bestow such endeavour to perfume a dunghil lust? and shall not we much more lay out our selves now upon things that are of an excellent nature, on whom God hath determined to bestow such weights of Glory? see the disposition and drudgery of a poor sinner in seeking to keep up a part at a distance from God, *Isa.* 59. 9, 10. *Thou wentest to the King with oyntment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase thy self, even to Hell*; *thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way, yet saidst thou not, There is no hope, &c.* What Oyntments, what Perfumes, what Cost, what Trouble was there expended by this poor wretch, to bring about his interest in a

way

way agreeable to his own luſt, and wretched heart of apoſtaſie, debaſing its ſelf, even to Hell? and ſhall we be ſo loath to lay our ſelves out to the utmoſt in ſuch oyntments and perfumes, as are on ſo bleſſed an object, and to ſo advantagious an end as is now propoſed? Shall the whoriſh Woman, *Prov.* 7. 17, 18. perfume her Bed with Myrrhe, Aloes, and Cynamon, to ſatisfie and fill her ſelf and her luſt with greater content; and are we ſo loth to prepare ſuch a bed for our Lord's concerns till the day break and the ſhadows flye away. Oh! lets learn, that as we have yielded our members ſervants to uncleanneſs and to iniquity; even ſo now let us yield our ſelves ſervants to Righteouſneſs and to Holineſs: *Rom.* 6. 9. What fruits had we in theſe things, whereof we are now aſhamed?

3dly. We ſhould do all we can to raiſe a ſweet ſavour, for that the adverſaries of Chriſt do all they can to beget a ſtench upon the things of which we ſpeak; they do what they can to make them as the filth of the world, and off-ſcouring of all things to this day; the Dung-carts of the world, into which every one throws the dirt and excrement that they caſt out of their doors, 1 *Cor.* 4. 13. If the Witneſſes of Chriſt be ſlain, *their dead bodies are not ſuffered to be put into graves, but lie in the ſtreets of the great City*, Rev. 11. 8, 9. Pſal. 79. 1, 2, 3, 4. Pſal. 141. 7. Ezek. 24. 7. And why thus left above ground; but that (as *Iſa.* 34. 3) *their ſlain being caſt out, their ſtink may come out of their carkaſſes.* Shall the enemies of Truth do what they can againſt the Truth, as *Pilate* gave a charge, *Ye have a Watch, make it as ſure as you can*, Mat. 27. 65.

Were they at such charge to debauch *Judas*, to debauch the Souldiers that watcht the Sepulchre? and all to make the interest of a dead Christ abhorred among men; and shall we not do what we can to cover, if not recover it? Should the men of *Jabesh* adventure so desperately to rescue the dead bodies of *Saul*, and of his sons, from the reproach of the *Philistines*, and be at such cost to prepare a royal burning and burying for them? 1 *Sam.* 31. 12, 13. compared with 2 *Chron.* 16. 14. Shall the dead body of such an enemy of the Lord's interest (as he was against *David*) be so honourably rescued from the reproach of the Heathen? Shall not we do what we can for such an inteteſt as Christs is, when it is thus reproached, and exposed to scorn and contempt?

4thly. God hath furnished us (the weakest and poorest amongst us that are his) to do much that shall be very effectual and acceptable, this way, and to this end; discouragements then should not hinder us from doing what we can to preserve a a sweet Name and savour to Christ. Many cry out, Alas! what can I do? what have I to bring, poor creature! were I as able as gifted, as well qualified and furnished to Preach, Pray, Discourse, Dispute as others, I might attempt something. This reason is not right; its not Gifts but Graces (as I shall shew you hereafter) that send forth the most precious savour: and there may be an abounding of the latter of these in souls, to whom the former is denied. Nor doth the vertue of the embalm indeed lie so much in the aboundance of act, as of acceptation; she that cast in what she had, and therein did what she could, though it were in

value

value but two mites, yet it was accounted in vertue more than two millions: The love of such a poor soul to Christ is seen in a little token, and then the estimation of it you may reade, *Cant.*4. 10. *How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine oyntments, than all spices!* If true love be in the composition, the smell of such an oyntment, it is unparallel'd in Christs account. *Goats-hair* had its acceptance on and value from this consideration, *Exod.*25.2,4. and Women spinning it, whose spirits stirred them, *Exod.*35.26.

5thly. We should do as much as we can for Christ, because its a time and hour of temptation, wherein many Professors (if not most) do as little as they can for shame, through the fear of what the after reckoning may cost them more than the spices; Many are willing to be at much cost to feast Christ when his interest is rising, who have nothing to bestow at his funeral; nay, its well if such as cleave to Christ now, can pass without the sharpest censure from their very hands from whom better things might be expected. Such a one is a sinner, *Luke* 7. 29. Such a one is a waster, *Mark* 14.3. are the ordinary thanks we must look to meet with from them that have been great pretenders to Christ. There is few *Josephs*, few *Nicodemases*, that were but secret Disciples, when all was well, who yet boldly witness against the condemning of Christ, *Luke* 23. 51. boldly own and desire him, when condemned, *Mark* 15.43. richly embalm and intombe him, *Joh.*19.38,39,40,41. Since it is so rare to find secret Professors in prosperous times, grow bold afferters of him in adverse

verſe times; but on the conarary, moſt are offended at ſuch night-ſeaſons; forſake him and flee every one to his own and leave him alone, *Mat.* 26.31. *Joh.* 16.32. It ſo much the more concerns us, if the love of Chriſt conſtrain us to appear the more ſtreniouſly for him, and lay out our ſelves upon him.

6thly. We ſhould do all we can for Chriſt, becauſe God expects much from us this way, as the very end for which he hath raiſed us up, and brought us hither; he gives us this denomination, *Ye are the Salt of the Earth*, *Mat.* 5.13. Salt is good; its nature, uſe, and tendancy, is to preſerve from putrifaction and ſtench, things otherwiſe liable thereunto: if we loſe our ſaltneſs, our aptitude to preſerve a ſweet ſavour in our ſelves, and that whereabout we are eminently concerned, we are good for nothing, not good for the Earth, not good for the Dung-hill, but to be caſt out and troden under foot of men. Profeſſors that are unſavoury, nay, that are not ſavoury, and engaged to ſavour others in ſtinking times, they are, or are like to become the worſt of men. Our Intereſt is to preſs up to that character, 2 *Cor.* 2. 14. A people by whom God maketh manifeſt the ſavour of his knowledge in every place, being unto God a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh. He that ſavoured of the things of men, more than things of God, 'twas an offence to Chriſt, *Mat.* 16. 23. Its good to be as well what, as where God looks for a man to be, eſpecially in perilous times.

This

This might serve to have been spoken to the Second general Head, proposed to consideration, in opening the Doctrine, how it might be said, *She did what she could.*

Thirdly, We proceed then to the Third thing, represented to our consideration in this instance, namely, *The business or affair it self, about which she was imployed*; The which spiritually imitated and followed by us, is so much our concernment; *She came aforehand to anoint his Body to the burying.* Of her act in the strict acceptation of it, and its application to the body of Christ's flesh, that was then expresly anointed by her, I shall not now speak; the rather, because (as such) it is exalted at the Fathers right hand, not only far above the Grave (Death hath no more dominion over him) but also above any possibility of being reached by any offers or attempts of ours, to add to the glory or favour of it. But he hath a Body alwayes with us, as I hinted in the explication of the terms, adequated, and exposed to such endeavours of ours, as is my principal design to promote. This seems not obscurely hinted at, and intended in the *verse* before the Text, at least we may allude to it for illustration, *You have the Poor with you alwayes, and whensoever you will, you may do them good; but me ye have not alwayes.* Thus, though the Heavens do and must contain the Body of Christ up in Glory, yet he hath mystically and figuratively a Body of poor Saints alwayes with us upon the Earth; he hath a poor Cause and Interest, wherein he doth for glorious ends imbarque them; This is exposed to the compassion and bounty of those who would be thought his Friends, especially under these

theſe many deaths and burials, wherein an ill ſavour is frequently attending it; its a good work wrought on it, and ſuch as Chriſt takes exceeding kindly as done unto himſelf, *Mat.* 25. 40. When any proper attempts are made to preſerve this, from the bad ſavour that is incident to ſuch a ſtate of things, and uſually attends it.

Toward the better underſtanding therefore what properly concerns us in this caſe, as far as we may transfer it to our ſelves in this figure (not to ſpeak at large of the Body, Intereſt, or Concerns of Chriſt, expoſed to thoſe deaths, and propoſed to thoſe embalmings of ours, of which, and of this crucified ſtate of it, we have had when occaſion to treat) it ſhall ſuffice that we diſtinctly conſider theſe Two things.

1. Firſt, *What kind of ill ſavour is it, which this Body, Cauſe, and Intereſt of Chriſt is incident unto, and lyable to contract under the deaths and burials that muſt by the will of God attend it.*

2. Secondly, *What is the nature and compoſition of that Anointing or Embalming, which is proper to reſiſt a ſtench and putrifaction of ſuch a ſtate of things, in contributing whereunto Chriſt expects from us, that we ſhould do what we can?*

1. As to the firſt of theſe, thus; We may conſider the things of Chriſt which fall under our preſent diſquiſition, either in an abſtract notion as they are purely his things, and ſtand in a true and inſeparable union with him, and relating to him by vertue of the everlaſting Covenant, and the promiſes thereof, wherein they are given and aſcertained to him, beyond any poſſibility of failure or miſcarriage; or elſe we may conſider them

them more comprehenſively, as they are cloathed and circumſtantiated with divers additaments that are of a lower nature and allay, yet ſo involved and complicated by the wiſe diſpoſal of divine providence, as tends in a direct obſervance, to accompliſh and bring about the deſigns thereof: in this reſpect many things which ſeem to ſtand related in a way of preſent ſerviceableneſs to Chriſts intereſt, may, and will ſuffer ſuch conſumption as their own nature is liable unto; but in the former ſenſe, the things of Jeſus Chriſt that are propoſed to the care and ſeeking of the Saints, *Phil.* 2. 21. are by the power and vertue of the ſaid covenant, ſecured from any detriment tending to annihilation; but though deaths do often attend them, yet ſo ſtrong and effectual is their relation to Jeſus Chriſt, that becauſe he liveth, they ſhall live alſo; nay, though they die, they ſhall live again, *Joh.* 11. 25. Exceeding conſolatory is that word, *Iſa.* 26. 19. *Thy dead men ſhall live, together with my dead body ſhall they ariſe.* The poor Saints were crying out before under the manifeſt diſappointments, and miſcarriage of all their ſtrong cryes and travel, *verſ.* 14. *They are dead, they ſhall not live; they are deceaſed, they ſhall not riſe, &c.* But God would have his faithful ones know, that ſuch is the vertue of their relation to Chriſt as his dead body, that ſuch a Reſurrection is aſcertained to them, as ſhall not only deliver them from the power of the grave, *Pſal.* 49. 15. but manifeſt that their very death was gain and advantage to them, *Phil.* 1. 21. Their grave, a chamber of retirement, and bed of reſt, *Iſa.* 57. 2. till ſome blaſt of indignation be overpaſt, *Dan.* 12. 13. It was indeed the diſtinguiſhing

honour

honour of the Captain of our Salvation, that in his conteſt with death and the grave, he ſaw no corruption, *Acts* 2.25. to the 31. *chap.* 13.34. to the 37. In all things he hath the preheminence of *David*, to whom this Word of God came, *Pſal.* 16. 11. (who doubtleſs ſucked much conſolation from it) it is ſignified he ſaw corruption in this ſence, that what of him is corruptible is ſubjected to that way of refining; *Its ſown in corruption, but ſhall be raiſed in incorruption:* His better and noble part being preſerved in an excellent way of living to God, *Luke* 20.37,38. his fleſh alſo reſts in Hope. The corruption then, or any ill ſavour that may ariſe upon the intereſt of Chriſt thus conſidered, is not ſuch as tends to annihilation or utter diſſolution, the everlaſting purpoſes, covenant, and faithfulneſs of God with Chriſt, ſecures it in a ſtate of Hope; neither doth this only and ſingly refer to the final Reſurrection of the whole in a way of compleat glory at the laſt day (which was *Martha's* narrowing miſtake about *Lazarus*, Joh. 11. 24.) but ſhall be manifeſtly verified in ſuch eminent appearances of God, to get himſelf a glorious Name antecedently to that conſummating Glory, as ſhall anſwer and accompliſh a ſyſtem of bleſſed Promiſes, and promiſes of the Glory of the latter dayes, that ſhall be raiſed in the ruine of *Babylon*, and Reſurrection of the Witneſſes of Chriſt, tending to prepare his people, for his glorious appearing, as a Bride adorned to meet the Bridegroom.

Its not ſuch a rottenneſs, or ſtinking, as *Martha* concluded *Lazarus* to be, which would conſume and eat him out, not be prevented, reſiſted, and cured till the Heavens be no more, *Job* 14. 12.

There

There is hope in its end, Jer. 31. 17. 1 Thes. 4. 13. *Though the Lord shew us great and sore troubles, he will quicken us again, and bring us up again from the depths of the Earth*, Psal. 71. 20. *Though we walk in the midst of troubles, yet he will revive us*, Psal. 138. 7. The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, those precious Promises are of mighty efficacy to embalm it. Nevertheless there is an ill savour on several accounts, that is apt to be brought upon this body, or interest of Christ, at such times, under such deaths as we speak of, against which the embalm we treat of, is to be prepared; As namely,

1. There is a stinke apt to betide it, the occasion of which is meerly from without, arising from the rotten and corrupt dispostion of such as are instrumental in bringing such deaths upon it, who usually account it their interest to expose it to all the ignominy and contempt imaginable, that in the abomination thereof, a foundation may be laid for the excusing and commending themselves, in delivering the world from such a loathsome burthen. Thus they did with the green Tree, and no marvel if they do so with the dry. When they had in design to put the Lord of Glory to an open shame; what artifices had they to load him with all manner of ignominy both before and at his death, foretold by a spirit of prophesie, *Psal.* 22. 6, 7, 8. exactly fulfilled, *Mat.* 27. *He was scourged*, vers. 26. *Stripped*, vers. 28. *Mocked*, vers. 29. *Spit upon*; *his head smitten*, vers. 30. *Scoffed*, and *led to be Crucified*, vers. 31. *Scornfully inscribed*, vers. 37. *Reviled by them that passed by, wagging their heads*, vers. 39. *Mocked by the Chief Priests, Elders, and Scribes*, vers. 41. Had *the same cast in the teeth by*

the

by the theeves, verſ. 44. Reproached with his God, his Truſt, his King-ſhip, his Doctrine, his Prayers, as with a ſword in his bones thus they aſſailed him: Oh! how irkſome was the ſtench, that the ſpitting and diſgorging of a filthy generation upon him drew him under in this dying diſpenſation! And as they have done to him in his own perſon (who hid not his face from ſhame and ſpitting) ſo do they to thoſe that go forth to him without the Camp, bearing his reproach; *They are made a ſpectacle to the World, to Angels, and to Men; Fools, weak, deſpiſed, hunger, thirſt, naked, buffetted, pilgrims, reviled, perſecuted, defamed, made the filth of the world, and off-ſcouring of all things to this day*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 9. to 13. The word notes the * *filth ſcraped off ſhooes*; or from the pavement, or the dung-cart that goes through the City, into which every one brings his filth and caſts in. Every one had ſome filth to caſt upon *Paul*, and the reſt of the Apoſtles. So it was *Jer.* 15. 10. This ſtench had need to be provided againſt by ſuch as would have his Name be as a precious Oyntment. Divers miſtake the right way of performing this, ſuppoſing that the beſt way of reſiſting this, is by repelling and retorting it with the ſame meaſure into their faces who lay it on. Chriſts method of imbalming is quite otherwiſe, namely, by bearing it with all patience, meekneſs, and holy reſignedneſs of the judgment to God, who knows how to make their own tongues to fall upon themſelves, and their violent dealing upon their own pates. We have the high Inſtance and Example of Chriſt himſelf, 1 *Pet.* 2, 23. *Who when he was reviled*,

* Mr. *Burroughs Moſes* Choice.

reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatned not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously, Isa.5.6. *Mat.*26.67. *Isa.*53.7. So did they who followed his steps, 1 *Cor.* 4. 12. *Praying for the worst of our Enemies,* Mat. 5. 44. Acts 7. 60. and *over-comming evil with good,* Rom. 12.19,20,21. *tender, bearing in our bosome these re-reproaches,* Psal.89.50,51. *to be affected deeply with them, and melt under them,* Psal. 69. 7, 9, 19, 20. Psal.120.3,4. Zeph.3.18. and *quietly to wait on God, till he role it away,* is what concerns us in this matter; and happy are we if herein we lay out our selves to do what we can for Christ.

2dly. There is an ill savour frequently contracted, upon occasion of the corrupt flesh that adheres to many Professors of it, and pretended friends; their unsteady walking, and manifest back-sliding do procure a stinking savour to the whole, especially in such a season as we are speaking of; The Name of God is blasphemed among the *Gentiles,* by means of such, *Rom.*2.24. *Tit.*2. 5. great occasion is given to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, 2 *Sam.* 12. 14. It was not a small matter of ill report that doubtless was raised at this dark time whereof the Text speaks. If you suppose the enemies to scorn at this rate,

What is become of your King?

Why, he is hanged for a Traytor and Blasphemer. And,

What is become of the Deacon of that new-gathered Church, that was intrusted with the treasure?

Why, he sold himself to the Devil for thirty pieces of silver, betrayed his Master, and then hang'd himself, falling headlong, and then all his

bowels guſhed out; and this is known to all the dwellers at *Jeruſalem*, Acts 1. 19.

What became of Peter, *the moſt forward, zealous, Ring-leader of the Company?*

Why he, after he had drawn his Sword and ſhed blood, forſook his Maſter, and by and by denied him, once and again, and the third time; nay, curſed and ſwore that he never knew him.

What became of the reſt of his Diſciples in that tryal?

Why, after that they had promiſed, That *though they ſhould die with him, they would never deny him*, *Mat.*26.39. No ſooner was he beſet, but they all forſook and fled, and ſcattered every one to his own, and left him alone, *John* 16.32. Theſe ſore provocations of ſcorn and blaſphemy, falling in together with the dark adminiſtration it ſelf of Chriſt's Death, might well occaſion this out-cry (as *Jacob* ſaid to his Sons, *Gen.* 34. 30.) *You have troubled me, and made me to ſtink amongſt the Inhabitants of the Land, amongſt the Canaanites and Perizzites*; Or, as the *Iſraelites* to *Moſes* (though by them ill applyed, *Exod.* 5. 21.) *You have made our ſavour to be abhorred in the eyes of* Pharaoh, *and in the eyes of his Servants, to put a Sword into their hands to ſlay us.* Such falls of Profeſſors, as they, draw on themſelves wounds that *ſtink and are corrupted*, Pſa.38.3,5,7. So do they *cauſe the whole way of truth to be evil ſpoken of*, 2 Pet. 2. 2. this is a lamentation. Now againſt this putrifaction, it much concerns the Saints to lay out themſelves to do what they can, *ſhewing all good fidelity for the adorning* and perfuming *the Goſpel of God in all things*, Titus 2.10. *Having a converſation* (tranſcendantly)

honeſt

honeſt among the Gentiles; that whereas they ſpeak evil of them as evil-doers, they may by their good works which they ſhall behold, glorifie God, &c. 1 Pet. 2. 12. Phil. 2. 15, 16, Mat. 5. 15, 16. Titus 2. 8. Rom. 14. 16.

3dly. There is an uncouth ſavour apt to ariſe from the very diſpenſation it ſelf, though we ſhould conſider it unclothed, and freed from the former naſty circumſtances. Mortality in any reſpect is unpleaſant; diſſolution is not deſireable: The Saints that deſire to depart, do not deſire to be unclothed (as ſuch) *Phil.* 1. 23. 2 *Cor.* 5. 4. Every ſuch death is a ſowing in ſome diſhonour, weakneſs, the corruption alſo, 1 *Cor.* 15. 42, 43. This is a ſtartling to Nature, Sence, and Reaſon. In the Concerns of Chriſt, whereof we ſpeak, there is no ſuch death beſides it, but ſome thing ſuffers loſs, its unclothed of ſome ſeeming beauty, although in the iſſue it be to make for a more real and ſubſtantial glory; every ſentence of death hath ſome reſemblance to the King of Terrors, *Job* 18. 14. This contracts paleneſs upon the faces of Friends themſelves, *Jer.* 30. 6, 7. ſwooning, fainting fits are apt to ſeize them, who (with *Joſeph*) weep over and kiſs ſuch corps, *Gen.* 50. 1, 2. Imbalmings are needful to reſiſt ſuch ſadnings; ſo *Prov.* 27. 9. Oyntment and Perfume rejoyce the heart, ſo doth the ſweetneſs of a man's Friend by hearty counſel. Chriſts Sepulchre was a Grave, though hewen out of a Rock; and imbalming was requiſite, though never man lay there before, *Joh.* 14. 39, *&c.* eſpecially ſeeing weeping Viſiters deſired acceſs, not only unto, but into the Sepulchre, *Mark* 16. 5. *Joh.* 20. 6, 8. The Grave or Cave of

Lazarus fetched groans and tears from *Christ* himself, because he loved him, though he was come to raise him, *Joh.* 11.33,35,38. The aptness of the choicest Saints to faint, swoon, and quail at the Grave of that Interest (whose Resurrection yet they frequently expect) calls for cordial confections, liberally prepared for such funerals.

Secondly, Proceed we to the Second branch under this general Head, and that is, To take knowledge what is the Nature of this composition of Imbalm, that is proper to withstand the said ill-favour in the several respects of it, about which also consider we,——

1. First, *Some general Properties or Qualities that are principally to be heeded in this Preparation.*
2. Secondly, *The special Ingredients that must concur to make up the Composition of it.*

The former of these I shall propound under the Observation and Improvement of two or three words, in her case in the text, which may direct our care in this business.

1. That which we bring to the Lord on the present intendment, must bear proportion to hers in this quality. Hers was (and so must ours be) very *Pure* Ointment. The word *Spiknard*, the margent reads *Pure-nard*; some think it should be translated, *Upright and Perfect Nard*: They taking the word נאמן to be derived from אמת, and so signifie *faithful, proper, pure, and unmixed Nard*, it being liable to be adulterated, vitiated, and corrupted. By due proportion whereunto, all endeavours of

of ours, muſt have this principally heeded, that ſimplicity, integrity, and true ſincerity do truly qualifie whatever of this kind be attempted, which directs us as wel that al the *ingredients* be unfeigned and anſwerable to the pure ſtandard without hypocriſie; as alſo that there be nothing admitted, which is of a forreign allay, which will prove of a corrupting nature to all the reſt. We read that in the *Levitical adminiſtration*, there was both an holy Oyntment, and an holy Perfume, for the ſpecial uſe of the Tabernacle, to be compounded by ſpecial direction, according to the Art of the Apothecary, *Exod.*30.23,24,25,34,35,36. The Spices, Doſe, Confection, and Application of it muſt be ſtrictly ordered by the ſtandard of the Sanctuary, under penalty of death on the leaſt corruption or deviation: The which pointing unto Goſpel-things, I might ſhew particularly, requires all manner of care, that what we bring before the Lord for a ſweet ſavour, do fully anſwer the pattern for ſimplicity and godly ſincerity; a little evil elſe, will ſpoyl much good; *Dead Flyes* (ſaith the Wiſeman, *Eccleſ.*10.1.) *cauſe the Oyntment of the Apothecary to ſend forth a ſtinking ſavour; ſo doth a little Folly him that is in repute for Wiſdom and Honour.* They have need of clean hands, and a pure heart, that doth approach with ſuch intendments. *What manner of perſons ought they to be in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs? If they loſe their ſavour, wherewith ſhall they be ſweetned?*

2dly. What we bring on this deſign, muſt bear proportion to hers in this, Her *Spicknard* was *very precious.* Which expreſſion ſignifieth as well the inward vertue and excellency of it, as the rich

price, coſt and value of it. *It might* (ſaid the Diſciples) *have been ſold* (and ſuch things ſeldom yield what they coſt) *for three hundred pence*; which likely was the Roman penny, by computation about ſeven pence half-penny of ours, that amounts to about *9l.—7s.—6d. ſterlin.* So great a value to be expended at one daſh on Chriſt, by a Woman; that ſeems to have been not one of the richeſt neither; being ſo highly commended, and propounded as an exemplary inſtance to us, ſhews that what we bring of this kind, muſt be in the ſight of God *of great price* (as a gracious frame of Spirit in his children is ſaid to be) even that *hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible*, 1 Pet.3.4. In this alſo it is ſignificant, that the external coſt and detriment, that ſuch vigorous attempts may bring upon us, ought not to be drawn into the reckoning, as worthy to be named or counted dear to our ſelves, ſo we may bring him Honour, bear up his Name, ſerve our Generation, finiſh our Teſtimony, and hereby raiſe him a ſweet ſavour in the midſt of an adulterous age, where we are brought forth. The debate and reſolution between two generous ſpirits (*David* and *Araunah*) about offering up a ſweet ſavour to the Lord, is very teaching, 2 *Sam.* 24.24. *I will ſurely buy it of thee for a price; neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth coſt me nothing.* Such as profeſs a perſwaſion of the neceſſity toward this confection, of a rich acceſs of the precious things of Heaven, ſuch as precious Blood (1 *Pet.*1.19.) of a precious Chriſt (1 *Pet.*2.7.) apprehended by precious Faith (2 *Pet.*1.1.) through precious Promiſes (*verſ.*4.) in a precious Word (1 *Sam.*3.1.) anſwering

anſwering to thoſe precious things of Heaven, &c. *Deut.*33.13. to 16. Such I ſay as acknowledge a neceſſity of theſe, are much overſeen, to ſtick at, and ſtand upon things of a lower value, ſuch as, Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Brethren, Siſters, own Life, *Luke* 14.26, to 33. *Mat.*10.37, 38,39. *Mark* 10.28,29,30. as though they were too coſtly or precious to be laid down upon this honourable account, *if the Lord have need of them.*

3dly. The Oyntment ſhe brought, is in this reſpect teaching to us, That the Application of it was very *Manifeſt*, *Liberal*, and *Diffuſive*; She did not only open, pierce, and give ſome vent to it ſparingly and gradually, but *brake the Box, pouring it out upon his head.* It beſpeaks the buſineſs performed with ſuch good will, ſo throughly and effectually, as intended neither ſecreſie nor reſervation, as his head and all his other parts were filled with the Oyntment (anſwering that Scripture, *Pſal.*133. 2.) ſo was the whole houſe intentionally filled with odour of it, *John* 12. 3. —— Chriſt is principally honoured with our affairs of this kind, when we appear moſt openly and communicatively in ſending forth the ſavour, and ſhewing forth the vertues of him that hath called us out of darkneſs into his marvellous Light, 1 *Pet.*2.9. The excellency of this compoſition is beſt diſcerned, in its conteſt with, and conqueſt over oppoſition, then ſmelling moſt, when cenſured, cruſhed, bruiſed moſt; holding forth the Word of Life as Lights in the World, *Phil.* 2. 15, 16. to make all men ſee what is the fellowſhip of the Myſtery, *Eph.*3 9. We only then anſwer the ends and expectation of

Christ, now pressed after, when (though in censuring perilous dayes) we do in our several places and capacities, *do what we can*, by a publick Testimony, bear witness to every Truth and Vertue of his, and such especially as are most eminently striven against, by the wickedness of the dayes and places we live in.

We come now to speak to the special Ingredients of the *Confection* which is only competent to preserve a sweet savour to Christ's dying Interest, about which, for the encouragement and direction of the meanest Saint, to *do what they can*, this must be considered, *That all of them that are a sweet savour unto God, they are the Spices and Powders of the Merchants, Cant.6.1. Mark.16.1. brought from far*, and to be bought at Gospel-prices, *Rev.3.18. I counsel thee to buy of me, &c.* That which is of our own growth, *Phil.3.8,9.* begged or borrowed, *Mat.25.9.* will not serve the turn. This, though very precious, yet they that have a mind to trade in it, may have great penyworths, *Isa.55.1,2,3.* Nor is it the less acceptable to the Lord, or thankworthy, that they bring it with this acknowledgement, 1 *Chron.29.14,15,16. What am I, and what is this people, that we should be able to offer so willingly? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee; all this store that we have prepared cometh of thy hand, and all is thine own.* —Moreover, this should be an encouragement to the poorest, weakest Believer, That though spiritual gifts of deep knowledge and utterance, may do much towards the raising, and repute, to a dying cause; Yet have the graces of the Spirit, shining in the hearts and conversation of a poor Believer, an estimation

eſtimation of a greater price in the ſight of God, and a real and direct tendency to glorifie the Name of God in a ſtanding way, when the high and renowned gifts of Propheſie may fail, and Tongues ceaſe, and Knowledge vaniſh away, 1 *Cor.* 13. to the end. The truth of which we have verified in our dayes, and may yet further, That the great, learned, famed men, who would be thought the only Bulwarks and Champions for the Truth and Cauſe, have ſhrunk from it, and their Names rot and ſtunk, whileſt a few poor deſpiſed Saints that own themſelves nothing, and have no might, have yet been preſerved, to abide with Chriſt in his temptations; and having obtained a little ſtrength, do not deny his Name. Thus hath it been in all Ages, *Not many Wiſe, &c.* But *God hath choſen the fooliſh things, &c.* And *I thank thee Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth* (ſaith Chriſt) *that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes; even ſo Father, &c.* But more particularly;

1. In all ſuch *Confections*, there is indeſpenſibly neceſſary, *A lively Faith of the operation of God, without which it is impoſſible to pleaſe him*, Heb. 11. 6. *Rom.* 14. 23. This contributes ſtrength, ſavour, and duration to all other ingredients (as they ſay Ambergreeſe doth to all Perfumes) is in the front of all others, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5. And though it be precious (*v.* 1.) yet muſt have vertue ſtill diligently added to it. *By Faith* Joſeph *when he died made mention of the departure of the Children of* Iſrael, *& gave commandment concerning his bones*, Heb. 11. 22. Many are the excellent exploits recorded by *Moſes*, performed by *Joſeph's* Faith; yet the Spirit ſingles this one out (doubtleſs

doubtleſs for its exemplary eminency) to abide upon this Goſpel-File, that his Faith at dying (though the Light of *Iſrael* were for the time ſeemingly put out with him) had ſuch a ſingular regard to the aſſurance of the Promiſe of deliverance, that on the ſingle evidence thereof he gave commandment touching his bones. What Commandment? namely, the ſame he had given touching his Fathers bones, *Gen.* 50. 2. That *they ſhould be embalmed*, the better to comport and be in fellowſhip with the deſign of the Promiſe, in the truth of which he had ſo much confidence, as he was contented his bones ſhould be kept (though imbalmed) above ground, and not repoſed to their proper reſt, till his people alſo ſhould be brought to reſt in the Land of Promiſe; his Faith preferred a Cave in *Canaan*, before a Pyramid in *Egypt*; and would be preſerved by an *embalming*, wherein Faith had the principal hand, *Gen.* 50. 24, 25, 26. *Jacobs* bones muſt alſo be embalmed upon the credit of that precious Promiſe, *Gen.* 46. 4. *I will go down with thee into* Egypt, *and I will ſurely bring thee up again*. *Jacobs* bones muſt be brought ſweet to *Canaan*, to ſhew the precious compliances of Faith with Promiſes, ſeemingly dead and broken to Sence and Reaſon.

2. *There is neceſſary in ſuch embalming, Love and the fruits of it.* Of theſe two, ſomething was ſpoken above, as being principal agents in doing what we can. This conſtrains the ſoul to do excellent things, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. beareth, indureth, acteth, layeth out unſpeakably, 1 *Cor.* 13. 7, 8. *Cant.* 8. 6, 7. *Work of Faith*, and *labour of Love* are joyned together, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 3. thinks it can never do enough for

for Christ, and for poor souls (*chap.*28.) this causeth an odour of a *sweet* smell, a sacrifice *acceptable* and *well-pleasing* to God, *Phil.*4.8.

3. A Third Ingredient that admirably accompanies the other (as one of the three principal Spices, *Exod.* 30. 23.) *is the patience of Hope*, 1 *Thes.*1.3. 1 *Cor.*13.13. This is choicely fitted for such a Grave, till such a Resurrection, *Acts* 26. 6,7. *Job* 14. 7, 14. It's of an exceeding sweetness (1 *John* 3. 3.) and comforting tendancy, *Rom.*12.12. It sweetens a stinking prison, *Zech.*9. 11,12. *Acts* 28.20. a stinking grave, *Psal.* 16.9. it maketh not ashamed, *Rom.*5.5. because of the precious love of Christ shed abroad, &c.

4. Without *Holiness* there can be no such sweetness as is pressed after, *Thou wilt not suffer thy holy One to see corruption.* Saintship both in its truth, and manifestation, is indispensibly required hereunto; *A cleansing our selves by the power of Promises from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in fear of God.* To speak properly, *Holiness* is a composition of all the Graces of a Saint in a joynt concurrence; and is the very complexion of the new-creature, as Holiness is the Nature of God, and respects all his glorious attributes, and perfections. In proposing this therefore, I speak the whole of a Christians Concerns in this business, *Be ye clean who bear the vessels of the Lord.* Under this then is intended all the fruits of the Spirit innumerated, *Gal.* 5. 22,23. 2 *Pet.*1.5,6,7,8. and elsewhere plentifully described, and exhorted to.——

5. I shall therefore only add, *That a spirit of nobility, and Zeal for God, not liable to be prostituted to the*

the love or fear of creatures, is most eminently requisite to compleat a sweet savour to the scorned things of Christ. A shrinking private low spirit, very much dishonours so great a Leader and Commander, as Christ hath been unto us; A most lively example is in the case before us, —These poor Women were so far carried above their fears, that in the face of danger in a time of fears, though in the morning while it was yet dark, they made their approaches to the Sepulchre to perfume it, though it might be judged both unseasonable, uncivil, and unsafe for Women to come so near an armed Guard (especially if Souldiers were then as they are now) set on purpose, to prevent the consequences of such twylight approaches, *Mat.* 27.63,64,65,66. And let loose to all manner of incivilities without controul, *chap.* 27. 27. to 31. Such a Spirit becomes us; not ashamed, not afraid of the Testimony of our Lord, nor of his Prisoners, but ready to be offered up, as partakers of the Afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God: *For we have not received the spirit of Fear, but of Power, of Love, and of a sound mind,* 2 Tim. 1.7,8.

These vertues of Jesus Christ in their conjunction, fixation, and exercise, in the spirit and walkings of Saints, are the Oyntments and Ornaments in the sight of God and Men of great price; neither should the weakest Saint be discouraged, to bring forth what they have of this kind, to the common design; and treasury Christ puts a value on it, and then we should not hold back more than is meet. Which leads me to the *Fourth general Consideration* propounded for opening the main *Doctrine*, namely, —

Fourthly,

Fourthly, *How are we to conceive of Christ's Acceptance of what is done of this kind by us?*

We see the Text speaks it, directly, and fully in the case of this censured, hard-thought-of poor Woman; and if we can find the disposition and temper of his heart to be the same in our case, it may prove a great encouragement and engagement to *do what we can for Christ, whether men be pleased or displeased at it:* All I shall do here, is to shew (1) That Christ accepts kindly and well pleasedly, such offers to raise a sweet savour. And then (2) How he signifies this his Acceptance.

Of the former, take but one testimony, *Cant.* 4. 12, to 16. *Thy Plants* (saith Christ to his Church) *are an Orchard of Pomegranates with pleasant fruits, Camphire with Spikenard, and Saffron, Calamus, and Cinamom, with all trees of Frankincense, Myrrhe, and Aloes, with all the chief Spices, &c. Awake, O North Wind, and blow O South, that the Spices thereof may flow out.* That by those several sweet-smelling Spices, are intended the Graces of the Spirit, I think is ordinarily concluded. The scope of this Scripture, is to draw forth the smell of these upon the consideration of the value that Christ puts upon them, and the acceptation he hath of them, even then when poor souls are under some straitning Providences, too much inclosed, shut up and sealed; To prevent which privateness of spirit, and to draw forth this fragrant perfume to more advantage, the North-wind, and South-wind, are called to meet, in their opposition, upon the Garden; signifying, perhaps, that commotion and disquiet state of things, where such contrary blasts have their violent contests, *Dan.* 7. 2. by means where-

whereof, though the Garden may ſeem to ſuffer ſome ſpoyl and loſs, yet it's to the heart of Chriſt, that his Spicknard, and other Plants, through theſe bruiſings and ſhakings, ſhould ſend forth the ſmell thereof: However this ſeems evident, That whatever private, low, and undervaluing thoughts the poor Saints have of their own attainments, becauſe they are but Plants yet, not tall Trees, as the Cedars of *Labanon* that God hath planted; yet Chriſt hath his eye upon their ſpiritual Nature and Original, they are all Slips of that Branch of Renown, are ſweeter and more acceptable in his account, than (through their humility) they ſeem to be in theirs; we yet know not the high value he puts upon the riches of the glory of the inheritance in the Saints, *Eph.* 1. 18. and to have them in exerciſe, eſpecially on ſo ſolemn occaſion as this is; why it is the joy and rejoycing of his heart. The heart of Chriſt in point of this acceptance may be read in *Davids* on an occaſion, which hath ſome reſemblance, at leaſt might be uſed to illuſtrate this, and that is, in his expreſſing himſelf thankfully to the men of *Jabeſh-Gilead*, for the Funeral-love they had ſhewed to one, who had been the Lords Anointed, 2 *Sam.* 2. 5, 6. *Bleſſed be ye of the Lord, that you have ſhewed this kindneſs to your Lord, even unto* Saul, *and have buried him; and now the Lord ſhew kindneſs and truth unto you; and I alſo will requite your kindneſs becauſe ye have done this thing.*

The bleſſing he gives them, ſhews his acceptance to the uttermoſt, the occaſion thus; There was a day when the men of *Jabeſh-Gilead*, were in unſpeakable diſtreſs by means of the hard terms offered them by *Nahaſh* the *Ammonite*, 1 Sam. 11. 1, 2,

1,2. they could have their peace upon no other terms than by espousing an irreparable mark of reproach and infamy on themselves, and all *Israel*; and in this nick of extremity, *Saul* puts his life in his hand, and rescues them seasonably, and wrought a very great deliverance. This kindness of *Saul* to them, they were never in a capacity to requite, till the day that the body of their Lord, and instrumental Saviour, was hanged on the Wall of a Garison of the *Philistines*, as a mark of like reproach and ignominy on the whole Interest of God. In such a day of death and danger, when the body of their Lord, and his dear Children, is hung a stinking in the face of the Sun; now is a time to prove and improve the kindness, and ingenuity of their spirits toward their Lord and *Israel*, by putting their lives in their hands, and doing what they could to fetch him off from, and give a check to that reproach of the enemies of the Lord on his Name and Interest. They attempt it, they succeed, and bring off these dead bodies, and (mark it) *they came to* Jabesh *and burnt them there, and took their bones and buried them, and fasted seven dayes*, 1 Sam. 31. 11, 12, 13. They not only *buried*, but *burnt them there*, which was the manner of Royal Funerals: compare it with 2 *Chron.* 16. 14. *They laid* Asa *in a bed which was filled with sweet odours, and divers kind of spices, prepared by the Apothecaries art, and they made a very great burning for him:* See *Jer.* 34. 5. *With the burnings of thy Fathers, the former Kings which were before thee, so shall they burn odours for thee.* This perfumed Royal Funeral you see hath acceptance and recompence with *David*. And shall Jesus Christ, who laid down his life

life to take away the curse and reproach from us, and hath set us free from wrath to come (which we can never requite) now call for a proof of our kindness, and thankfulness, by doing what we can to rescue the honour of his Name and Interest that is now exposed to contempt, and to bestow a more perfuming funeral on it, and lamentation over it, than without danger we durst do; and shall we stand upon the hazard and cost of it, and in so doing shall not we lose the blessing of *David*, *The Lord shew kindness and truth unto you.*

Nay, shall not the men of *Jabesh-Gilead* rise up in judgement, who did what they could to cover the shame, and recover the honour of a wicked Prince, who fell for his iniquity, as if he had never been anointed; and shall we refuse, or come short of perfuming this service to the King of Glory, who is put to an open shame in his Name and People; God forbid. —This honourable act will find acceptable resentment and recompence from Christ as that did from *David*, and as kindness to the dead hath alwayes done on ingenious spirits: *Ruth* 1. 8. & 2. 20. *Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and the dead.* But let us see how Christ doth manifest this his acceptance of such attempts.

1. Christ is ready to shew forth his acceptance of this kindness, by his being so willingly ingaged to plead the cause, and vindicate the innocency and integrity of such a People as do what they can for him; many are the ill instructions at home, and the ignominies abroad that will be raised upon such an account; But of this we may have assurance, he stands ingaged to make good that word,

1 *Sam.* 2. 30.

1 *Sam.* 2. 30. *Them that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* As Christ stood not upon his own vindication, when his Father's honour was in his eye; but he committed his cause to him, who effectually hath brought it about; So should not we stand upon our own vindication, when the Name of Christ lies at the stake. See *Psal.* 35 5,6. *Commit thy way to the Lord, &c. And he shall bring forth thy Righteousness as the light, and thy Judgement as the noon-day.* We see how effectual he doth it in the Text, concerning this poor Woman in all her ignominies, and hard speeches that she met withal; and no less will he shew it at this day, to be the high title of his honour, *Thus saith thy Lord, the Lord, and thy God, who pleadeth the cause of his people,* Isa. 51. 22. *He will thorowly plead their cause,* Jer. 50. 34. *and execute Judgement for them, bring them forth to the light, and their eyes shall behold thy Righteousness,* *Micah* 7. 9. Marvellous have been the Lord's wayes and methods of asserting the integrity of his people, from the midst of the clouds of ignominy.—

2. Christ sheweth his acceptance by ordering the issues of all the provision that a people makes for his Name and Glory, that it proves the directest provision they can possible make for themselves and their best interest, *The liberal man deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand,* Isa. 32. 8. That course wch the generality of people conclude according to rules of Providence is the way to ruine them, proves the most effectual means to establish them: of this *Psal.* 112. gives a full testimony. The good man, is there brought in

gracious, full of compassion, shewing favour, and lending, dispersing, giving to the Poor; and yet in all respects, making the fullest provision for his own best blessedness in so doing. That of Christ is the Paradox to prudent Professors in perilous times, which they can by no means resolve, *He that will save his life shall lose it, and he that will lose his life shall save it.* How evidently is this made good in the good Name of persons? Men have generally reasoned, that to cleave to such a Profession, or Testimony, or People, hath been the high-way to be disgraced for ever; whereas the Lord hath manifestly built up the Houses of such (as its said of the *Midwives* Houses in *Egypt.*) We reade in the first and last *verses* save one of *Heb.* 11. concerning the Worthies, That *by Faith they obtained a good report, though they received not the Promise.* It was matter of reproach to them, that they should imbrace and cleave to certain Promises from generation to generation, owning them as their Interest, which yet brought not forth in their day, the great things they testified of, and professed that as Pilgrimes and Strangers they waited for; they made this their business, to raise a good report, and preserve a sweet savour upon the Promises, which yet brought not forth as they expected they should; but yet this they got by it, the Promises left a good report on them, *Their Names* (by means thereof) *were as precious Oyntment*, Eccles. 7. 1. for that their conversation were as precious Oyntment to the Name of God. ——

Christ shews his acceptance of such, by making known to such the most early discoveries of his further breaking forth of Glory beyond any other.

So

So it was in the case of the Text, they that were at this early costly provision of Imbalm, had the first Knowledg, Evidence, and Joy of the Resurrection of Christ from the dead; and must be the first messengers of the blessed Tydings thereof, *John* 20.1,14. to 18. *Luke* 24.10. *Mark* 16.9,10. They had not the first manifestation of it who were men of the greatest parts, imployment, or esteem. Nothing is more obvious to frequent experience, then the preventing Grace of Christ, at least in keeping the spirits of such sweet, quick, lively; and if any fore-tastes of approaching Glory be going, such overcommers shall have the morning-star, *Rev.*2.28.

Christ's acceptance is frequently signified this way; They who do what they can to raise a sweet savour on the concerns of Christ, shall be rendred the most useful, blessed, and a blessing of any others in their generations; *The blessings of the souls and bodies of them that were ready to perish shall come upon such*, Job. 29. 13. *They shall be as dew from the Lord, and as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men*, Micah. 5. 7. Their love to *Christ*, laying out its self for him thus, is likened to the Oyntment on the head of *Aaron*, and the dew of *Hermon* and *Sion*; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, *Psal.*133. The Families, Neighbours, Fellow-members of such shall rise and call such blessed, *Prov.*31.28. *Ezek.* 34.26. The distinguishing mark of acceptation is reserved by *Christ*, till the day of recompence, which hastneth greatly, in the wch not the value of a cup of cold water hath been given on this sweetning design, but shall have its eminent reward. Upon

that enquiry of the poor Diſciples, *Mat.* 19. 27. *Behold, we have forſaken* [*All*] *and have followed thee, what ſhall we have therefore?* It was a great [All] a few Fiſhing-Nets and Boats, and the like poor things; Yea, but it was their [All] they had done, and were undone, as far as they could for *Chriſt*; and what remaineth to them? Truly they having followed *Chriſt* in the Regeneration (or as *Luke* 22.28.) continued with him in his Temptations, he appoints to them a Kingdom as the Father appointed him, *They muſt eat and drink with him in his Kingdom, ſitting on Thrones and judging the Tribes of* Iſrael; *and every one that hath forſaken Brothers, or Houſes, or Fathers, &c. ſhall receive an hundred fold, &c.*

From the words, a few things more tending to a cloſer Application of the whole, ſhall ſerve for a cloſe.

Uſe 1. This might be improved by way of Information thus; If *Chriſt* do put ſuch a real high value upon all attempts that are levelled toward this deſign, to preſerve a ſweet ſavour on his concerns, when they are by the world expoſed to ſtinking. Then

1. May we gather how the heart of *Chriſt* ſtands aſpecting ſuch as do what they can to render him and the things of his Name and Glory odious, by laying contempt and reproach upon it what in them lyeth; ſurely it will be a bad day for ſuch when he ſhall plead with them, and vindicate the quarrel of his abuſed Name and Intereſt: If they that honour him ſhall be thus honoured, then they who deſpiſe him ſhall be lightly eſteemed, 1 *Sam.* 2. 20. It's worth conſideration, what requitals

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in kind Chtiſt hath in ſtore for ſuch indignities done to him, what funerals he hath reſerved for ſuch enemies; See *Iſa.* 14.9,11,18,19,20. *Hell from beneath is moved at thy coming.* —*Thy pompe is brought down to the grave, and the noiſe of thy viols; the worm is ſpread under thee, and the worms cover thee.*—*They that ſee thee ſhall narrowly look upon thee, &c. All the Kings of the Nations, all of them lie in glory, every one in their own houſe, but thou art caſt out of thy grave like an abominable branch, as the rayment of thoſe that are ſlain, thruſt thorow with a ſword.* — *As a carkaſs troden under foot, thou ſhalt not be joyned with them in burial, becauſe thou haſt deſtroyed thy Land, and ſlain thy people: the ſeed of evil-doers ſhall never be renowned.* —— An Inſtance like unto this of the Lord's ſeverity to ſuch as have provoked him, and abuſed his Glory, we have, *Jer.* 16. 4. *They ſhall die of a grievous death, they ſhall not be lamented, neither ſhall they be buried, but they ſhall be as dung upon the face of the Earth.* Theſe are ſome of the Lord's wayes, that he can take, and many times doth with ſuch as are not tender of his Glory: *Conſider this ye that forget God, &c.* The funerals of *Jezebel*, that dreadful enemy to the Lord's Prophets and People, may be a warning to ſuch Perſecuters.

2dly. It alſo lets us underſtand with what little favour he doth and will regard thoſe who have been pretenders to him in the dayes of Proſperity; but in Adverſity, and under the paſſions and reproaches that attend the Goſpel, they hide their faces as it were from him; nay, are ready to deal with him, as the *Phariſees* are condemned for doing, *Mat.* 23. 29, to the end. *Who built the Tombs*

of the Prophets, and garnisht the Sepulchres of the Righteous, and yet espouse and walk in the very spirit of those that slew them; see their doom, and downfal in the same place.

3dly. It also shews how little thank-worthy they will be in the day of *Christ*, and how much 'tis to their loss of their comfort now, and will be of their reward then, who think every thing too much, that they either actually lay out, or put in hazard for the Name-sake of *Christ*. If a good wish indeed will do it, or the blessing mentioned, *James* 2.15,16. would be accepted, that (possibly) might be spared; but as for any thing that is costly, or dangerous, that cannot be adventured, *It's an hard saying, who can bear it?* Of such will not Christ say, *They that are ashamed of me and my Word, before this evil and adulterous generation, of them shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he appears in his Glory, and in the Glory of his Father and of all his Holy Angels?*

Use 2. But I rather proceed to offer a few things, that may tend to direct and ingage in this matter. And here (first) some *Cautions* to prevent mistakes and miscarriages, in the Preparation and Application of this Imbalm; and (then) a few *Directions*, and I shall conclude.

Caution 1. Take heed that you continue not in such a state, and carry such corruption about you, as will render you utterly incapable of doing any other than raising a stench on the things of *Christ*. Whatever you have to do about them, the purity of this Confection is such as the least evil owned and allowed, will diffuse its malignity through it to the vitiating the whole, and rendring it of none

effect:

effect: A little such leaven will sowre the whole lump; *Dead Flyes cause the Ointment of the Apothecary to stink, so doth a little folly, &c.* This is notably illustrated in the case put, *Hagg.* 2. 11, 14. where is shewed that there is much more force and malignity in a little evil to corrupt much good, then there is in much Religious Service of such a People, to leave an impression of goodness on things otherwise void of it. Look to it that you be very clean who bear the vessels of the Lord in this Service, lest you defile this undertaking for the Lord: clean hands and a pure heart are indispensibly requisites in this affair.

Caution 2. Take heed according to what Rules, Instructions, or Dispensatory you compound this Imbalm. I hinted before how exactly careful God was in the Composition both of the Oyl and Pouder that were to perfume his Tabernacle, *Exod.* 30. 23, *&c.* No less is he jealous of the present things under consideration, Take we heed therefore of false Rules, and Principles, as namely;

1. Take heed how you admit of humane Wisdom and Prudence, the consultings of flesh and blood, to dictate and give rules in these matters. It is very fruitful in multiplying inventions, evasions, expedients, distinctions, which indeed have a shew of Wisdom, but its frequent that the Serpents subtilty is foisted in, in the place of the simplicity of *Christ*; to call any man *Master* in this matter, is very dangerous.

2. Take heed you mistake not by seeking the *Cheapest* instead of the *Chiefest* way of this Perfuming. It's indeed our wisdom and understand-

ing to set down afore-hand and cast the cost, *Luke* 14 28,31, *&c.* lest having begun, you be not able to finish; but then it must be brought to this issue, *vers. 33. Whosoever he be that forsaketh not all that ever he hath, he cannot be my Disciple.* Nothing less than all one hath, even his whole Living, every thing on this side Heaven must be made up in the account (*if the Lord hath need of it*) to be laid out on it.

Caution 3. Admit not Custome, common Fame, nor common Fear to be your Counsellours: These and the like *Cautions* must be persued.

But I had rather Conclude with a few *Counsels:*

1. If you do any thing excellent for Christ, do it early: So did this good Woman, both in the Text and at the Sepulchre. Many stay their hands from works of this kind, till they see what others, who are accounted more eminent, will do; they think it imprudent, and to savour of rashness and singularity to be presidential and exemplary: but this will one day be found the excellency of Christian activity in works of this nature, *That they tarry not for men, nor wait for the sons of men,* Micha 5.7. We may in this case allude to that passage, 2 *Sam.* 19. 12. *Ye are my Brethren, ye are my Bone and my Flesh, wherefore are ye then the last to bring back the King?* Many are so late and lingring in works that concern Christ's Glory of this kind, putting it off from one time to another, till their spirits sink to the work, and the things themselves (as was said of *Lazarus*) stink in their nostrils.

2dly. Con-

2dly. Conſider the *Royal Extract*, Deſcent, and Original of this Cauſe and Intereſt, the Imbalming of which with theſe ſweet Odours you are exhorted to. It's the off-ſpring of a King, of a great King. The *Wiſe men* were liberal in preſenting him with Frankincenſe and Myrrhe whom they underſtood to be King of the *Jewes*, though laid in a manger, *Mat.*2.11. —— And *Jehu* had ſo much generoſity, when he had done the judgements of God upon *Jezebel*, as to give order, 2 *Kings* 9.34. *Go, ſee now this curſed Woman, and bury her; for ſhe is a Kings Daughter.* Shall a curſed Woman have a becoming burial, becauſe ſhe is a Kings Daughter, and ſhall not the *bleſſed Cauſe* of the King of Kings be better reſpected? though it be thrown to dogs, and be meat for them, it deſerves better for his ſake to whom it ſtands related in Royal Progeny. He that (as was ſaid) was judged by the Wiſe men of the Eaſt worthy of a preſent of Frankincenſe, Gold, and Myrrhe at his birth, being born King of the *Jewes*, and of a coſtly bed of Spices by honourable counſel at his funeral, being Crucified as King of the *Jewes*, deſerves upon the ſame account an honourable treatment, when any of his things come under clouds and ſuſpition by the men of the times. Some Kings indeed were ſo evil, as debarred them from Royal Funerals, *Jer.*22.18,19. 2 *Chron.*21.19,20. But *Chriſt* deſerves better uſuage. If you would have your hearts ingaged to this honourable work, *lay to heart the merit of it at your hands.* 'Tis both nearly related to you, and hath done unſpeakable worthy things for you, while it was in its flouriſhing capacity and condition. It's very near and natural

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to you that are Saints; as *David* said, *Ye are my Brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh:* It is the very Womb wherein we were warmed, and brought forth in that state of Saint-ship under the profession whereof we stand. Of *Sion* it shall be said, *This and that man was born in her:* Reciprocations of love to such Relations, and of endeavours if it were possible to requite them, 1 *Tim.* 5. 4. would engage to do our utmost at their Funeral, as *Joseph* imbalmed his Father, who tendered him dearly, and lamented his supposed death exceedingly, *Gen.* 37. 34, 35. So would a Mothers Grave (because a Mothers) be extraordinarily bewayled, *Psal.* 35. 14. Many that bury an only Child, or first-born, will spare no cost about it: *This* (say they) *is all the Portion I have to pay it.* What was said of the men of *Jabesh*, might here be repeated; they thought they could do no less to the remembrance of a Father in *Israel*, who had done so well for them; or the Exhortations to the Daughters of *Israel*, to weep over him who clothed them in Scarlet, with other delights; who put on Ornaments of Gold upon their Apparel, 1 *Sam.* 1, 24. much more in a spiritual sense hath this Interest of *Christ* deserved at your hands. Oh! be not ungrateful at such an opportunity as this, you may never have the like to express your ingenuity, if you elapse this.

4thly. *Press after larger participations of a Royal Spirit*, if you would do any excellent thing at this Funeral. Where there are any sparks of true Nobility, they will vent themselves this way, whereas spirits of a base and sordid complexion will shrink in such a time of cost and hazard as this. It

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was a brave ſpirit in *Araunah*, when there was a debate betwixt *David* and him about the price of the Sacrifice, that was to be offered up for a ſweet ſavour in an infectious naſty ſeaſon, *As a King, gave he to the King*, 2 Sam. 24. 23. 'Twas hard to diſcern by their ſpirits (if external badges had not been there to diſtinguiſh them) which of them had moſt of the ſpirit of a King in him. Such largeneſs of heart is exceeding proper and honourable in the caſe before us. A little laid out in the power of this Principle will be highly enhanſed in the value of it. It was a notable Inſtance, and evidence that *Riſpah* (though but the Concubine of *Saul*) retained ſome tincture of a Royal mind, that when the ſeven men of the off-ſpring of *Saul*, were executed at the inſtance of the *Gibeonites*, with that reproachful and curſed death; yet ſhe from her noble diſpoſition, and generous reſpect to that Royal off-ſpring, doth what ſhe could to keep them from thoſe corrupting caſualties that are apt to attend carkaſſes, expoſed as they were in the open air, to be a prey to the Birds by day, and the Beaſts by night; her ſack-cloth was accepted as a noble pavillion, & ſpoken well of at Court, till a more noble Funeral was provided for them, 2 *Sam.* 21. 9, to 14. Chriſtians, if you are (as you profeſs) made Kings and Prieſts to God, a Royal Prieſthood, then you have another, a nobler ſpirit than have others; it concerneth and becometh you to ſtir up and improve on things that are moſt excellent. It's not for Kings (Oh Believers!) It's not for Kings and Princes to do leſs than the nobleſt things. To open their mouth for the dumb in the Cauſe of all ſuch (as on this account) are

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appointed to destruction; *Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.*

5thly. Know for your encouragement, That though Christ expecteth you should do what you can to imbalm his Interest, yet the soveraign vertue of that, which indeed doth and must preserve it from rotting and stinking, depends upon the Lord's own provision and preparation: Though your good will be accepted, and your work shall be rewarded, yet it's freedom from corruption flowes from the absolute dominion he hath over the Grave where he lieth, and the purpose and ingagement that he hath made known in the New Covenant to give it a Resurrection. It's no small encouragement therefore to know, and be insured that we are workers together with Christ in this design, which must needs be succeeded with a good issue, and therefore it's good adventuring thereupon.

6thly. Lastly, Resolve upon this, That if you live not long enough to see its Resurrection, yet you will be laid in the same Grave with it; where it dieth you will die, and there you will be buried; The Spices then prepared and laid in to imbalm it, will also perfume you. The last Testimony of Friendliness the old Prophet could shew to the young Prophet (1 *Kings* 13.28,29,30,31.) was to take up his dead carkass, though a Lion had slain him and stood by, lay him in his own Sepulchre, and give this charge, *When I am dead, then bury me in the Sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried, lay my bones beside his bones.* *Joseph* laies the body of Christ in his own new Tomb, *Mat.*27.60. *Abraham* and *Sarah*, *Isaac* and *Rebeka*, *Jacob* and *Leah*, and *Joseph* also covet to be laid together, *Gen.* 49. 29,31.

29, 31. A Cave in *Canaan*, where they must be laid in the Faith of Promises, which is more desireable than the chiefeſt Royal Sepulchres in *Canaan*, Gen. 23. 6. *chap.* 49. 29. *chap.* 50. 25, 26. It was nobly reſolved in *Ittai* the Gittite, 2 *Sam.* 15. 21. *Surely in what place my Lord the King ſhall be, whether in death or life, there alſo will thy Servant be.* Such bleſſed Reſolutions raiſed on true Principles, *Rev.* 12. 11. *Acts* 15. 26. *chap.* 20. 24. *chap.* 21. 13. have their acceptation now, and ſhall not miſs of an early Reſurrection in due time, 2 *Kings* 13. 21. *Dan.* 11. 13. *Iſa.* 26. 19.

FINIS.

The gracious Author of the fore-going Treatiſes, after full Three years Suffering under very hard circumſtances, enduring many inhumanities from mercileſs Goalers in Exceſter-*Goal, was continued Priſoner under Military Guards in the Iſle of* Plymouth, *where a violent Sickneſs in a few dayes ſeized upon him; in which a Friend admitted to a conſtant Converſe, judged theſe following Paſſages worthy his Obſervation, which may fitly be here inſerted, as a Diſcovery of the Grace granted in his various Changes, and Abiding with him, until by the Will of God, having finiſhed his Work, he fell aſleep.*

A Friend giving him ſome Emulſion to drink, he drank and ſaid, *All paſſages are clear, between Stomach and Belly, Head and Heart, and that and Heaven, bleſſed be God.*

A Friend then asking him if he had any thing to ſay to them in the Family with him, in caſe the Lord ſhould call him from them? He replied, *I deſire the bleſſing of the God of Heaven may be upon you, and a full Reward from him be miniſtred to you for all the labour of Love you have ſhewed to me for the Lords ſake;*

ſake; and I beſeech you continue ſtedfaſt in the Faith and Teſtimony to Chriſt and his Concerns, who is as worthy as ever, notwithſtanding all the reproach caſt on him and them; and I deſire earneſtly you will take heed of being offended at Him, his Word, Works, or Wayes, but be careful to be found in his paths, as ever you hope to have help, to ſtand before him with peace and comfort at his appearing.

He further ſaid, *Chriſt had a poor Remnant yet left, that he was perſwaded ſhould be helped to ſtand, and no more to be afraid of the worſt that men can do, than he, through Grace, was now afraid of what Death could do to him.* And ſaid, *Though I may be rolled into my duſt, yet there is a promiſed approaching Glory, that God will moſt certainly bring forth out of all theſe great deeps, with which we are now encompaſſed, though* (ſaies he) *it may be you alſo may not live to ſee it, but to die in the Faith of it will be enough; and the Lord grant you may not ſtagger, and that no cloud may be upon your Teſtimony to God, nor* (unleſs clouds be *good for you*) *upon your Intereſt in him.*

And as to the Church at *Plymouth*, he ſaid, *He had oft, ſince his Sickneſs, on his bed, begg'd of God, that the Lord the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh, would ſet a man over that Church, a man whom he ſhould chuſe, to go in and out before them, to feed them, that ſo the Lords poor flock be not utterly ſcattered by thoſe that carry or keep them Captive.* Numb. 27. he referred to.

And further ſaid to a Friend then preſent, *I deſire you, if God by his Providence or otherwiſe, ſhall hereafter ſpeak any ſuch thing to you, though but in a whiſper, you would not deſpiſe or neglect it, but look on it as the Call of God to you, and obey it accordingly.*

To

To which that Friend replyed, My weakneſs is ſufficiently known to you, my ſelf, and others, for ſuch a weighty ſervice, making me dread the thoughts of ſuch an undertaking as at preſent furniſht; yet I hope I ſhall carefully mind, what the Lord may ſpeak to me in future, as alſo what hint you have now given about it, to do therein as God ſhall direct.

After this diſcourſe ended, he further ſaid, *He had been a poor ſtaggering vain creature, and ſince the time he came to this place, and the Lord gave a little recovery, he had not ſo improved it as became him; he earneſtly wiſht he could write a little, that he might leave a witneſs againſt it.* Saying alſo, *Ah! I have many things in Short-hand, that none can read but my ſelf, by which means they will be loſt.*

Then added, *I have a poor Siſter, an honeſt affectionate ſoul, who I deſire you will do what you can to comfort, ſupport and ſtrengthen, according to that counſel,* 1 Theſſ. 5. 14. Now we exhort you Brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, ſupport the weak, be patient towards all men. *And deſired we would ſometimes ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to her. And further ſaid, as to the Church in* Plymouth, *wherein he had labored, he deſigned to ſerve the Lord in it, and to gather ſouls to Chriſt; and had now the witneſs of a good Conſcience in that matter, that he had not wilfully omitted, or dealt negligently in that Work in the main of it, as opportunity preſented; and bleſt the Lord, that ſince his Impriſonment, he had heard of ſix or ſeven of that Church, that had gone triumphing to Heaven before him.*

Then ſpeaking of Chriſtians Sufferings, he minded that word, 1 *Pet.* 4. 16. *Yet if any man ſuffer as a Chriſtian, &c.* He minded what a bleſſed thing it was to ſuffer as a Chriſtian, *viz.* To begin, hold on, hold out, and at laſt come off as a Chriſtian; It was a great Word and Work, and ſpeaking of his pains he had on his outward-man, yet bleſſed God, *There was no ſorrow added, nor no ſting in them,* that was ſtuck in the ſides of Chriſt, bleſſed be his Name.

A Friend asking how he did? *Never better in my life* (ſaid he) *bleſſed be God.*

One asked him whether he would have any Cordial? He ſaid, *Yes, may it be an inſtrument on God's behalf to recover a little ſtrength before I go hence, and be ſeen no more, to ſpeak yet a word for God, elſe tell me of no more Cordials, for I drink full draughts.* One giving him a little, he drank and ſaid, *I am made to drink of the beſt ſpiced Wine, the Wine of the Pomegranate; his Love is better than Wine; I am drinking of a Vineyard, not a drop of red Wine bleſſed be God: the Day I think is come, I ſhall be led to the Fountain of Living Water, and ſhall hunger nor thirſt no more;* And added, *The Wine that is red might have been my Portion, even fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt, might have been the portion of my Cup.*

Oh! if Jacob's *heart revived to ſee the Chariots to carry him to* Joſeph *in* Egypt, *How ſhould my Soul revive in me to ſee my God's Chariots of Salvation to carry me to ſee him, not in* Egypt, *nor Earthly but Heavenly* Canaan; Then he fetch'd a ſigh, ſaying, *I ſigh, but am not ſad.*

Then

Then applying himself to speak to Friends about him, he said, *And to you that are troubled, rest with me there is prepared for you shortly.*

One telling him, he spent himself; he said, *He would gladly spend and be spent for Christ, yet would not make undue haste to Heaven till his Beloved pleased, yet I would bid my Friends Farewel, remembring* Elijah *threw his Mantle on* Elisha *at parting; and though I cannot yet say whether it be finally farewel:* Paul *bid the Romans farewel often, but I can bid you heartily farewel, blessedly farewel.* Then added, *I have one word for* Sion, *I have been oft refresht in thoughts of old* Jacob, *as I mentioned but now, how he revived, and said, Joseph* is yet alive, I will go down and see him before I die: *But yet before he comes out of* Canaan *he is at a stand, and God must be sought to know his mind,* Gen. 46. 4. *God assures him, he would go with him into* Egypt, *and would surely bring him up thence, and yet* Jacob *must die there; I have thought how can this word be true? and have been answered, it was true to* Jacob *collectively, though not personally considered, his seed, and with them him also, dead or alive, must be brought up with them in the time appointed; and though* Jacob's *life indeed is took off in somewhat an unexpected time and way, yet his Faith is kept up so as he gives charge in that matter, ere he dies, that his bones should be carried up with them, and so gives testimony to the Truth of God in that case, and the like doth* Joseph.

Oh Friend! God hath brought us down unto Egypt, *it may be where we would not have gone; he hath indeed let us go in the beginning of our way where we would, and we then went under full gales like to them,* Exod. 15. 14. *to* 18. *saying, We shall come up out of*

Egypt, *it may be pitching it too personally as to us, for whether we in our persons shall be brought from* Bashan *and the depths of the Sea, may yet be a question; but if we be indeed the seed of* Jacob, *that seek him and his face, we shall then most certainly be brought up dead, or alive, out of* Egypt: *let's endeavour to keep up Faith in that.*

There is a Cause *God hath stretched out his hand to own amongst us, though men may be divided about it what it is; some say it consists in Stating and Asserting our Rights against Oppressours; but I take it to be such a Testimony to Christ's Kingdom, that few will espouse but such as love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. Though as to* out-works, *they must be owned as works of wonder, but the* inward-part *is the main thing, even to bring forth Judgement and Truth into Power and Practice, so as all the upright in heart shall follow it; this, even this shall be so brought out and lifted up over the heads of all oppositions and oppressors; but God hath much of this kind yet to bring forth in the hearts of his own Children:* But, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee.

One asked him, Will you have some refreshing? *I have refreshing* (saies he) *the world knows not of, and Strangers cannot intermeddle with.*

His Sister desired, he would take rest, He answered, *Christ's Disciples said of* Lazarus, *Joh.* 11. If he sleep, he shall do well, *speaking it of natural sleep; but to sleep in Jesus, as those that God will bring again with him, is much better.* Adding, *It was a sweet resolve of* Hezekiah's *broken words,* Isa. 38. *when he had spoken hard words of God, not becoming a man of his acquaintance with divine dispensations, when he sayes,* What shall I say? he hath spoken, and himself

hath

hath done it; I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul, *vers.* 15. *Yet recollects himself, vers.* 16. O Lord, by these things men live; and in all these things is the life of my spirit, so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. So I have a word or hint sometimes as if the Lord would say, *Eat a little, and drink a little*; as if he might have some little further work for me; but then old pains, and not old clearness again at other seasons, making me see and say, Oh! how hard a thing is it to keep an even hand with God, in his various dispensations. So *foolish was I and ignorant, as that good man once said*, Psal. 37. *Sometimes as a man, then as a Beast, &c. but 'tis good for me to draw near unto God, and to say though he kill me, yet I will trust in him.*

But it pleased the Lord though by very undiscernable degrees, after keeping his Chamber three quarters of a year, to give him a Recovery for some season; after which being seized with Sickness, which continued to the finishing of his dayes; the following, being but few of many worthy occasional sayings of his, were by the same Friend carefully treasured up.

Being asked by a Friend, *Is all well within?* He answered, *All's well there, blessed be God my God, the high rock of my salvation; my soul hath trusted in him, and shall not be ashamed.*

His Sister discovering something of impatience at the stroak upon him, threatning his dissolution; he earnestly reproved her, saying, *Oh! be more a Woman, be more a Christian; Is this what you told me yesterday?*

Being then asked by a Friend, Have you ought to say to us, before you leave us? He replied, *O love the Lord all ye his Saints! when and whereſoever he calls to follow, go after him; yea, though he kill you, yet love him ſtill, truſt him ſtill.* One ſaying to him, Yea, worthy is the Lamb to receive Glory, Honour, Obedience, and Service from all his Saints: He replied, *He is worthy indeed, for he hath redeemed me by his blood, bleſſed be God he is my God, he is my God;* And then ſaid, *The Lord hath ſtrangely raiſed me, and called me to put on a very high Profeſſion, and carried me more ſtrangely through it to this hour; though it may ſeem to be but a poor thing in its ſelf conſidered, yet the Lord hath had a care of ſuch a poor worm, and hath not left me ſhamefully to forſake him, nor hath hitherto forſaken me; and bleſſed be my God that hath brought me into bonds for his Names ſake in this day; this honour have not all his Saints, though they be a People near unto him; but Oh! the crowning Mercy is this, that I can behold my Father's face with joy; and can ſay in ſome meaſure, I have finiſhed the work thou gaveſt me to do, and now, holy Father, I come to thee.*

I have heretofore given ſome account of my ſelf to you, & as you may remember as to thoſe remarkable Paſſages of my Life, both as a *Chriſtian*, a *Miniſter*, a *Sufferer*; This laſt I am now come to put a Seal to, as *they have been Sufferings for Chriſt's Cauſe and Kingdom, as God hath given him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is his Body, and indeed as he hath appointed me, ſufferings for his Names ſake. So I muſt ſay, to his praiſe, he hath ſo far reſtrained mens wrath, as he hath made Enemies to be at peace with me, and friendly to me; this I would commend*

to you my dear Friends, as an Argument for ever to truſt in God.

There is alſo, ſome thing I have been under from his own hand, that hath been with great pain upon me, as you have been Witneſſes; and my ſorrows here have been oft-times greater than my groanings, and this laſt hath been well nigh overſetting at ſome ſeaſons, inſomuch as I thought it was impoſſible to have born the torments laid on my poor fleſh; but now I ſee nothing is too hard for God, ſometimes to lay on his own Children, or for his Power to bear them up under.

His Siſter tells him, You ſpend your ſelf in ſpeaking: He anſwers, *Let me ſpeak that I may be refreſhed. It is refreſhing to me to ſpeak of what God hath made ſweet to me.* Then he calls for a little Julip to drink; a Friend ſayes to him, It will be hut a little while, and you will thirſt no more. He replyes, *Ah bleſſed are they that eat Bread in the Kingdom of our Lord, and drink Wines there, he will lead them by Rivers and Fountains of Living waters, where they ſhall thirſt no more, and he will wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

His Siſter deſired to know how he was ſatisfied as to his coming hither, ſhe having been the occaſion as ſhe judged of his coming from *Exon* to *Plymouth*, and conſequently of his coming hither; He anſwered, *Very well ſatisfied, all have been ſteps of divine ordering; I would not have come from* Exon, *might I have had my own will; I would not have ſtayed in* Plymouth, *after I had Preached once, but God would have me ſtay; I would not have come to this place, after my time of ſuffering was out in the* Town-Hall *at* Plymouth, *if I might have had my own will; but God would bring me hither, and bleſſed be the Lord*

that let me not have my own will, bleſſed be God that brought me here, and bleſt me here, with deſirable Company and Mercies, concerning which we have had occaſions and ſeaſons to ſpeak well of God together; yea, ſince I have been brought here, and ſick here, yet the ſteps of God have been in great wiſdom with me, and the bottom of them all paved with Love, in the main of his goings in theſe dark and heavy ſtroakes; I ſay, *in the main of them they have been attended with peace to my ſoul; I have had Old Wine, or New, afforded ſtill; ſometimes he hath ſaid the Old is better, and hath made ancient experiences of his Love, ſweet to me, yet not alwayes alike clear; ſometimes he hath ſeen good to cut ſhort within and without, and this laſt tryal, to deal plainly, came on in ſomewhat a cloud, at its entrance I was ſomewhat ſtupid, thinking no more in it than ordinary; but I was at laſt awakened by the Lord to think that this might be a long and cloſe tryal, and though he let me ſee the Anchor dropt within the Vail, yet had I not that freſhneſs of Evidence, till within a few dayes laſt paſt, when he called up my Spirit to a cloſe ſearch, in a Night or two, though I ſaid but little of it, but he graciouſly iſſued that matter in a token for good, that whether I live or die, I hope I ſhall wear to his praiſe, while I have my being; ſo that thus 'tis with me now, Chriſt is lovely to me in all the afflictions I have met with, in all I have ſeen and ſuffered: wherefore rejoyce with me, O my Friends, let us rejoyce and bleſs the Name of the Lord together that hath dealt well with me; and do not I beſeech you diſgrace the throne of his Glory, becauſe of me or this fleſhly ſtate that muſt be taken from you. Murmur not I pray ye, that yet you ſee not* Saviours *come up upon Mount* Zion. *The reſerve of Spirit is with him, and*

the

the Lord hath many Children to bring in, besides those that are brought, that shall be brought in by vertue of fresh Anointing, so as they shall be known to be Children of his that he hath blest: And as I desire you would not weep for me, so not inordinately for your selves neither; adhere to Christ, and fear none of those things ye shall suffer. I have no deep insight into deep Mysteries; but this I Believe God is a-rising *to do some great thing in the World for* Sion's sake, *and though it be hard for us to lose our Chariots and Horsemen, some by Apostacy, some by Death, some by Scattering, yet when the Gathering time shall be, it will be no grief, nor sorrow of heart to behold the way of Gods working in all these things, when we shall say he hath done all things well.*

There are many signs upon us, that prognostick great things near at the doors, though I dare not say I know much distinctly as to Times, Means, and Methods, only be assured not one jot or title of all God hath spoke shall fail, though our interpretations of them may fail.

If any ask how it stood with me, as to these things at this season, tell them, *If I die, I die in as full Assurance that God will give reviving to his poor despised Cause and Interest, as I do believe the Resurrection of this Body, and that I know both the one and the other are founded on such a Word as shall stand as Mountains of Brass. And advise them also, to take heed how they wait on mens Indulgence, so much talked of, but let their Faith stand in the Wisdom, Power, and Faithfulness of God, and their Prayers be directed more that way, endeavouring to make Religion their business; yet if any shall lean to such a deceitful Bow, be not you dismayed or discouraged at it, but hold*

on

on your way, that shall be strength to you.

And now, Oh now, could I send Epistles to all the Churches ; *in these things I would, but that work I think is over ; be ye therefore as the Epistle of that, to them. And now my dear Brother and Sisters, I desire to bless God for you, and for your great tenderness to me ; but herein, as to particulars, my mouth is stopt. I hope you will continue love to my poor Sister, you see what a poor Creature she is, yet I hope one that will find Mercy in the day of Christ. And dear Sister* A. L. *remember me to all Saints in* Plymouth, *and tell them, I have no greater joy than to hear that they are of those Children that are walking in the Truth, as to hear of any of them walking loose to Christ, and loose to the Profession of him, is my Souls grief. Oh! tell them, that as ever they hope to see my face with joy at the great Day, that what they have seen and heard from me a poor worm that hath been according to the mind of the Lord, they would do, and the God of Peace shall be with them. And now Friends, as a * good man once said, so I say (as to what you may have further to say to me or ask of me) While the Oyl runs bring your Vessels.* His Sister asked what he had to say to her Family ? He answers, *They had been a kind poor Family, the Lord make them his Family ; and, dear Sister, look over a weak Husband and Family, and difficulties that may occur as to them and you. You and I have been Witnesses to the Faithfulness of Christ, how he hath provided for us in former dayes ; and I challenge you, if you can, to say to the contrary, he hath not failed us thus far.* Then he said, *I am weak and faint.* A Friend by, said to him, The Lord the Creator to the ends of the Earth fainteth

* *Sir* H.V.

eth not, but gives power to the faint, and to those that have no might, renews strength. He answers, *Yes, he doth so, and will also roul away the reproach of his People in due time, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it; Oh this part, this part of the reproaches of Christ, this now almost eight years reproach, What Glory is there in it, to those that are helpt to bear up under it.*

Then speaking to his Sister *A.* said, *Dear Sister, Bear up, bear up, blessed be God for strength to you thus far, bear up still I beseech you, accept all in good part, and pass by all weaknesses; you and your Husband had Relations each of you, dear to you both; and also I trust to Christ, I desire not complementally, but really to be remembred to them all, and desire they may be all gathered up to Christ to meet him at his appearing.*

And I desire for you all that you may be strengthned to all the pleasure of God, that is yet to come to pass concerning you, and that you may come out of these great Tribulations as Sheep from the washing; and though you may see me possibly go away from you, in the fiery tryal, yet it may be you may be admitted to that Mercy of being bid come out and shew your selves; yet that is but little, *considering the* snares *that may yet attend such a state: But Oh! how much clearer is my way to come out thus, than by men.*

Then speaking to the *Maid*, he said, *I desire God may have the praise of what he hath wrought in, and for you, and wherever you are cast, I desire you may walk as a chaste Virgin.*

And to the *Nurse* he said, *I know not how you may think your self concerned in such discourse as this, since these may seem strange things to you, yet give me leave to say, they are some of the true sayings of God, how*

strange

ſtrange ſoever they may ſeem; yea, they are alſo needful things for you to be acquainted with; Oh preſs after them with all earneſtneſs.

Then a Friend preſent, ſpeaking after this manner, Ah! Brother, What is the meaning of theſe Diſpenſations of the Lord, in ſnatching away his choiceſt Saints from amongſt us, and leaving the pooreſt and weakeſt to be Concerned for him in ſuch a day, making them ready in ſorrow and ſadneſs of heart to ſay, By whom ſhall *Jacob* ariſe, ſince he is ſo ſmall? To which he replied, *How ſmall ſoever* Jacob *was, yet* Jacob's *God was not ſmall; He is a great King, and a God above all Godds; and as was minded but now, he gives Power to the faint, and our ſtrength is in the Name of the Lord that made Heaven and Earth, who doth and will do much by Babes; wherefore ſay not, I am a Babe, a Child, &c. but rather ſay, Here am I, ſend me, that God who was* Jacob's *God, who fed and led him all his life long, he hath been and is the God of the Seed of* Jacob *to this day, that hath led us thus far alſo, through a vaſt howling Wilderneſs, and ſuſtained us, and not ſuffered us to deny his Name: Oh this God is our God, let him be our guide even unto death. The Fathers that were before us, alas, what were they, and the Prophets, do they live for ever? no they were weak as we, and died as muſt we; but when the Lord had work for them to do, he gave Anointing for it, and then they could ſay they were full of Might and Power by the Spirit of the Lord to ſhew* Iſrael *their tranſgreſſion, and the Houſe of* Jacob *their ſin. So we, through Chriſt, can do all things, he ſtrengthning us. Look then to the Lord that gave the former rain, and will give the latter alſo in its ſeaſon, according to his Power.* And my dear Brother, *Be not diſcouraged,*

your

your work seems cutting short also day by day by many things, though what you may live to see or suffer, I know not, neither do I know how meet it may be to mind you of a motion I made to you about two years since on the like occasion about remembring the poor Flock I have travelled and laboured amongst, if God cast your lot in these parts; but hoping you will mind what may be your Duty in this matter, I shall say no more, but the Will of the Lord be done; be of good courage, and God shall strengthen your hearts.

His Sister was troubled seeing him so weak, which occasioned him to say, *Oh! be ashamed, Sister, of such a demeanor, cannot you let a poor Believer go to Heaven? Oh! did you but stand on the threshold and see what preparations God hath made for such a poor worm as I am, you would never be afraid of Death more. Oh! honour Christ much, I think he is coming near to honour me, though I know not yet that my Sentence is come out from him; yet I speak not as if I had hankering thoughts to stay. Oh! when shall I see the day? We shall sing at parting, and not mourn as now; blessed be God for ever, that he hath not let the Righteous to be ashamed, nor Wicked men to triumph over them for my sake. Ah! did they know what God hath pardoned in me, they might be apt to triumph more than now they can.*

If there seems any importunity from any Friends for any thing to be mentioned of me, when I am gone, speak moderately of me I beseech you; but if any thing hath been seen in me worth learning, let it be offered with much humility; or rather I think let my Works praise me in the Gate, but I limit not.

His

His Sister asked, Will you drink? *Yea Sister* (saith he) *Have you any of the best spiced Wine?* He then grew faint, and could speak no more at that time.

Afterwards, being asked how he did? He said, *All his bones were as it were out of joynt.* And added, *God hath reserved this Proof of my Ministry* (viz.) *in* much painfulness *until these few years last past, having been little acquainted with Sickness before.* He then asked *If it were day?* A Friend answered, The night was far spent, the day was at hand, even a morning without clouds, to which you seem hastening. To which he replied, *Yes, as a very clear shining after rain.* Being asked a while after, How he did? He (with his eyes lifted up) answered, *Nevertheless I am still with him, he holds my soul in life, will guide me by his Counsel, and afterward receive me up to Glory.*

A Friend that dwelt upon the place, coming to him, and speaking Religiously, He replied, *There was much talk of Religion in the World, but few had attained to acquaintance with the powerful inward part of it; and then minded that much of the power of Religion indeed was comprehended in that word,* Phil. 1. 21. For me to live is Christ; *not only to live on, or to Christ, but to live Christ, in all we speak or act is a high work: Lord, let my soul* (saith he) *into the sight and joy of it, yet more and more.* The same person enquiring of him, How it was with him in this hour? He said, *Blessed be God, he hath washed away my sins, and spoke peace to my soul, and thereby obliged me to follow him while I live, and much more to go to him when I die.* Then said, *O Father, shall I not now go hence, but return into a world of so many snares and dangers again.* And further tells the

Person

Perſon aforeſaid, That *he was very ſenſible of great reſpects received from her and her Relation*; And ſaid, *For a full recompence to you all, I deſire when ever you come to ſuch an hour as I am now approaching to, you may meet with the ſame Comforts that through Grace I now find.*

A Brother coming from far, a day or two after, to viſit him; being brought in ſuddenly upon him, ſeemed a little diſpleaſed, ſaying, *His Spirit was not now able to bear any ſudden thing without over-ſetting.*

That Brother asking him how he did? He anſwered, *Never better in my life.* But adds, *Think it not to be paſſion or words of diſtraction, for though I am very weak in body, yet God is very near to me.*

He alſo then ſaid to a Friend ſitting by, on the occaſion of turning in his bed by reaſon of wearineſs, *Ah! this is not our reſt, it is polluted; but there remains a reſt to the People of the Lord, and his reſt ſhall be glorious.*

After this he had a day or two that ſeemed to be hopeful to his Recovery, in which ſeaſon little was ſaid to him, or by him; being deſirous to let his ſpirits reſt from exerciſe in order thereunto, if ſo were the Will of the Lord.

But his Pains returning, and a Friend asking how he did? He anſwered, *It had been a night of exerciſe to him, inward and outward.* To which it was anſwered, That exerciſes were appointed by the Lord both for body and ſpirit; but how are you ſuſtained under them: To which he anſwered, *I am graciouſly born up ſtill, and kept in peace under all.*

Being

Being asked if he had yet any hint how the Lord might do with him, as to this dispensation he was now under, as to life or death? He replied, *He had nothing in that matter he could call divine teaching, but by laying all circumstances within his view, in the present case together, he thought he must go hence, at which poor flesh was ready to shrink and murmur.* It was answered, That must and would do so, while in its present being, it naturally seeking self-preservation, and avoyding and shrinking at that which threatens its destruction, and it must needs be irksom to it, to be following God in wayes it knows not, whence they come, or whither they lead, but yet notwithstanding it must be brought down; for a corn of Wheat cast into the ground, is not quickned except it die; and so in this case precedent to the quickning that is to be brought out, on the proper subjects of it: Death in one respect or other, must be brought on upon all fleshly glory and excellency, even in its perfection. Whereunto he replied, *Yes, it must so, for unless it die, it remains alone, and cannot be brought out in its glorious state, of the manifestation of the Sons of God, but by cracking the shell of this earthly tabernacle, and so coming out to it.*

A Friend coming to have felt his Pulse; He said, *I have not askt your observations in my case, it may be thought possibly it might adde some impressions of hopes or fears, if I should know what it is.* The Friend replied, His Observations in such cases vere not very material to acquaint him with; but saith the Friend, What are your own Observations in the case? He answered, *His Hope was on high, yet Flesh he found hankering in his Musings at some seasons, suggesting there was much desirable work to do, some of one sort, some*

ſome of another ; at this and the other place making him ready to deſire to ſtay, and loth to be gone : but when looking up and conſidering the ſtate of things, then he is made to ſay to his ſoul, Oh ! haſte away to thy Mountain. *And,* Oh ! that I had wings as a Dove, then would I flee away and be at reſt ; *I would not live alwayes, and am ready to ſay ſometimes as he,* Take me away, for thou knoweſt my dayes that they are vanity. *But Oh ! I am much more cumbred on the other hand with crying,* How long, Lord ! *And ſometimes am ready to wiſh an end, which way ever it be, by recovery or death.*

To which it was told him, That argued him a man. *Yes,* (ſaid he) *a poor man.*

It was told him again, All our Poverty, Weakneſs, and Unworthineſs, in the day approaching, ſhall but make matter for a ſong the more, to the praiſe of rich Grace, and Mercy, in the Lord's remembring us in our low eſtate, becauſe his Mercy endureth for ever.

On the ſame day, in the afternoon, a Friend asking him how he did ? He anſwered, *Coveting to overcome :* referring to a word, had been ſpoken that day in the Family, from *Rev. 2. 26.* of which one had given him ſome account. It was replied to him, That was a good work, and good in it, to be eying him that had overcome, by whom only we can be helpt to overcome. He replied, *Yes, to be able to ſay,* I have fought a good fight, I have kept the Faith, *is a great word and work.*

And further ſaid, *He had had his reflections, and he thought ſome injections alſo, that day of his neglects of ſervice for the Lord, that he might better have improved in times paſt, though in the main, the Teſtimo-*

my I have born to Christ, in my day, is a quieting, comforting Consideration, through the blood of Christ, though not the bottoming *Consideration, on which my peace is built, yet 'tis of great use, in a secondary sort, at such a season; and I mention it to you, that you may do much, suffer much, shrink not, nor neglect no work for God; it will be no grief of heart to any that have spent, and been spent, for God, his Name and Interest for dayes to come.*

Being very ill, and, in the apprehensions of those about him, like to leave them, he was asked, Had he any further word to them, or any of the Lord's People, before he left them. To which he answered, *I have spoken to you and them already the whole Counsel of God, according to what I have received, and was under no temptation, to keep back any thing through fraud; I cannot now speak much, and if I could, unless the great Remembrancer set home with Power and Efficacy, what is spoken upon our minds and spirits, it will signifie but little; and to add many words, would be but a vanity: but for you, and them, and all Saints, I pray that you may abide with God, and never be ashamed or tempted with fear or cowardize, or unbecoming complyances with base Earthly Worldly Interests to let go your holdfast on any Truth you have professed, as Truth is in Jesus.*

I have delivered to that poor Church I appertain unto, the Doctrine of a Free Gospel of Grace, wherein a foundation is laid in the blood of Jesus, of Peace with God through him, and they also, have with hands lift up to the most High, professedly accepted that Grace tendred to them; and I being, I think, about to leave Earth, and to go to my Father, and give account of my Stewardship therein; I do go in full assuran

assurance that it is the true Grace of God wherein they stand; and I do lay it before them, with the utmost ability such a poor worm as I can do, that they be not by Doctrine, Word, nor Spirit, soon shaken from their stedfastneſs, hither or thither, for life or salvation, but as they have been taught.

He farther said, *I also have been engaged in a witneſs to the* Royal Soveraignty of Christ *in his Institutions, against the Inventions of men opposed thereunto; which Testimony hath been born up against blindneſs and ignorance, in a poor dark world that lies in ignorance and wickedneſs; and their Testimony in fellowship with this of mine, hath flouriſht in former dayes, under those more promiſing propitious Proſpects we were then encompeſt and encouraged with, it had then by them and others,* Hoſanna's *aſcribed to it; but since God hath seen good to try this Testimony, and Spirits of such as profeſs it with a day of adverſity, that many looked not for, and they have hereby been tempted baſely and unworthily to throw away the Shield, as if it never had been anointed; the thoughts whereof hath many times almoſt broken my heart in pieces: But let all such know, I go away in this firm perſwaſion, as to the things we have together profeſſed as aforeſaid, that they are the true ſayings of God, and that such as in this hour of temptation have deſerted their Profeſſion of them, God will meet with all such if he love them, to awaken and recover them from such paths and poſtures of back-ſliding, or elſe to make them know, to their ſhame, and confuſion of face, that they have dealt diſhonourably with Christ and his Concerns, and dangerouſly with their own ſouls; which I deſire they may find Mercy to repent unfeignedly of, before it be too late.*

I have been also concerned in a Testimony with divers Churches, as to a work God hath had on the wheel among us in our dayes, very mysterious in many parts of it; there have also many tryals been upon it, and to try it, and to make up such a tryal, as all things considered, hath not been known in many generations. It hath also a Dark-side *and a Vail that God keeps upon it, by reason of which many are offended at it; but if I have not been left to mistake God and Gospel, it hath also a* Beautiful-side *that this world is not worthy of, and a time also appointed when its beauty shall be brought forth as the Light, and shine as the Sun at noon-day; though it seems yet to me, that times may pass over it, that may make some of those few stagger also; but this remains sure upon the whole, that though it be the day of* Jacob's *trouble, and it's very great, so that none is like it, yet he shall be delivered out of it: wherefore let not your hearts, nor any other upright ones, be dismayed at what remains; for though I cannot tell what comes next, nor have attained to that distinctness of knowledge (as were to be wisht and waited for) as to times and seasons, which God the Father hath very signally yet hid in his own hand; Yet I am very much perswaded,* this Generation *shall not pass away till the Lord appear to give signal Evidence of the Great Work he hath had, and yet hath upon the wheel, and also of his care of all that are concerned in it. Oh! Love the Lord all ye his Saints, the Lord preserveth the Faithful, and plentifully rewards the proud doers.*

At another time, being asked, Would he have any thing to *Plymouth*? He said, *No:* for saving the Interest of the Lord in *Plymouth*, the Town was now as little to him, as this little Island where he was.

Being

Being asked how he did? He said, *I am a poor sick weak creature still*; Adding, *That the Tempter had been very busie this Night with him, suggesting that it's much to him that he should be a Creeple; but the Lord* (he said) *had put the* Tempter *to shame, and given him to know, that though he was at present weak, yet in the Lord* Jehovah *he had still everlasting strength.*

At another season, a Friend asking, What, doth your hard work continue still? He said, *Yes, I am labouring as it were in the fire, which were not to be endured, but in hopes of the Crown.*

At another time, being asked how he did? He said, *Still in the Warfare, but on the Conquerors side.* To which his Friend replied, Blessed be the Lord, that hath chosen you to be a Souldier, and helpt you thus far as a good Souldier of his, to endure hardships. He replied, *Yea, we account them happy which endure*

One comes to him, and saith, Poor Neighbour! What of the Night? He said, *The Lord had made it a Night of sore affliction to him*; And said, *He was now poor and needy indeed; yet* (saith he) *my God thinks on me.*

To which his Friend replied, Yea, he hath also greatly magnified Mercy to you in this your sickness, by strengthning your Faith, and lengthning out your Patience, under such long sore visitations as these have been; and I trust is signally teaching you Obedience by the things you suffer. At which *he sighed*, And said, *Ah! that word, learning Obedience by the things we suffer, is a great word, and hath much in it, when God rightly opens it, and he doth teach Obedience, much indeed by such things beyond what*

we think of, our thoughts and wayes being far short of his in such things.

Another Friend that had been with him about the beginning of his Sickness, coming now to see him again; He said to him, *I remember I told you formerly, I had no cloud on my peace, and joy in the Lord, since this Sickness; but have seen cause since to change my voice in that matter, the Lord having, since that, brought me under tryals and cloudings sometimes, though blessed be God, they have been day, not night-clouds, through which God hath shined; and I cannot so much desire for my self or others, that we might alwayes be without clouds, as that our Holiness might might be promoted, and carried on by them, then all will be well.*

A Friend asking how he did? He said, *I have been this Night full of disorders.* It was answered, The whole Earth was so, and we, while dwelling on it, are like to participate in somewhat of the same kind, in one sense or other; all these disorders are but making way for that blessed orderly state of things, by which he will manifest himself indeed, to be the God of Order, and not of Confusion, not only in the Assemblies of the Saints, but throughout the whole Earth.

The same day, being asked by one, How doth this valiant Souldier of Christ? He shook his head at it, and said, *A pitiful Souldier.* It was replied, One great part of a Souldier was to endure hardships, and this part God had helpt him to do, at a blessed becoming rate, thus far; which was matter of thanksgiving to the Lord on his behalf, and gave ground also to hope he would in like manner be helpt to the end.

Then

Then those about him, looking at one of his hands (now bereaved of strength) He said, *Come, What see you? What tydings? Doth it rot? Let it do so, it must do so, yet shall mortallity be swallowed up of life, and this now poor perishing Carkass shall be brought up again, into a more glorious state, by the mighty power of God, by which he is able to subdue all things to himself.* It was then told him, We have no tydings more than ordinary, only had little hopes as to men, and means, as concerning his case, whatever the Lord might please to do.

It was then asked him, What tydings he had in himself, as to his case? He said, *Nothing at any certainty*; But said, *He heard Friends in the Room whispering oft, as if they saw or discerned some great change that were not fit for him to know. But I bless the Lord* (said he) *I begin to be more mortified to all this state of things here below, though Flesh and Blood hath sometimes its hopes and fears in exercise about them, but when God knocks off their Wheels, I see and then can say, by these things men live.* Yea, said a Friend, they live indeed at a rate they could not live, were it not for such dyings daily to all other kinds of living, and thereby bringing out to that way of Life, as to which way of Life, it's said, it cannot be brought out but by dying, it else remains alone. To which he said, *Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor Corruption Incorruption; yet Flesh is unwilling to hear of this.*

To which it was told him, No marvel that Flesh and Blood did boggle in such cases, when 'tis called to go in a way it knows not, and a knife at the throat, ready to kill all the way; 'tis therefore reckoned a great lesson to be learnt by all Christians,

not to truſt in themſelves, but the Living God; and is taught beſt by ſentences of death paſt upon all they are apt to truſt in, of a fleſhly carnal kind, 2 *Cor.* 1. 9.

Again, that day, a Friend asking how he did? He replyed, *Heavy, heavy.* It was told him, Earth would be ſo. *Yea,* ſaith he, *and the Sand weighty, but the New Heavens, and New Earth will not be ſo; their make will be of a more tranſcendent nature, by reaſon of the Spirit of Holineſs and Righteouſneſs that ſhall dwell in them.*

It was anſwered, Yes, In thoſe dayes the Righteous ſhall flouriſh. Whereunto he quickly replied, That *the Righteous had their day, a day that might be properly called theirs, in which they ſhould in ſome ſort flouriſh*; *But* (ſaid he) *it's ſaid, in* his *day, entitling it to Chriſt principally, the Righteous ſhall flouriſh, Chriſt ſhall have a day for it in the world.*

Being asked, What think you, ſhall you be returned to us again, or not? He ſaid, *Truly he knew not what to think in that matter; and when all thoughts about it were made, it was hardly worth a ſerious conſideration, in regard of their uncertainty, and the little of Chriſtian concernment in ſuch kind of knowledge; for though ſometimes it were very grateful to Fleſh and Blood, to be able to ſay, hereby ſhall it be known I am a man of God, by my coming to ſuch a place, or doing ſuch a thing, at ſuch a ſeaſon; yet when* Paul *went bound in Spirit to* Jeruſalem, *under fulleſt gales that ever he went, he muſt not know what muſt betide him there,* Acts 20. 22. *nor whether God would be glorified in him by life or death.*

A Clyſter

A Clyſter being miniſtred that day, which wrought not; it was asked, How he did? He ſaid, *Haſtening home now apace.* What makes you think ſo, ſayes the Friend? *Why* (ſaies he) *the Lord hath uſually made it his way with me, when he works me up to ſettled perſwaſions of things, they have uſually come to paſs accordingly; now having had Clyſters, and ſuch means adminiſtred, that have wrought with my poor body, long, even to admiration; but now it ceaſes to do ſo, and all paſſages ſeem ſtopt for evacuation of the humors lodged in my body; I conclude, he intends to take me away.* It was told him, It was but one Clyſter had ſo miſcarried with him, another might operate; and that ſuch a concluſion could not well be drawn from no better premiſes than that. Then he added, *God hath been many wayes bringing me to an acquieſcence in his Will as to ſuch an iſſue; he ſeems to be putting, and hath likewiſe been for this week or more, taking you off from glorying in the fleſh, of ſuch a poor creature any longer, by bringing this poor body under ſuch ſtraightning circumſtances, as may make you all willing to part with me, rather than to be continued under ſuch ſore pains to me, as well as trouble to you, that ſo you might let me go; and he having dealt thus with me, and alſo ſpoke, and continueth to ſpeak peace to my ſoul, I am upon the whole perſwaded, I ſhall leave you; and am helped to ſay in that matter,* The Will of the Lord be done.

The ſame day, a Friend asking him, How he did? He ſaid, *I am labouring, that whether preſent or abſent, I may be accepted of the Lord.* His Friend anſwered, It became him to be ſo, labouring, eying him, whoſe Soul hath travelled and laboured, that ſuch poor ones as we, might be accepted, and through

through whom God hath graciously witnessed his acceptance of you, and also of your witness-bearing unto him, in this your present suffering state (not only from men, but his own hand likewise) as I am fully perswaded. Then he groaned, and said, *Alas, this poor, weak, weary body.*

To which his Friend replied, It was made poor, in order to enriching; and seemed to be uncloathed, in order to be cloathed upon with his house from Heaven. There he fetch'd a deep sigh, and said, *Ah! if in this life only I had hope in Christ, I were of all men most miserable.* To which it was answered, Blessed be God, for that well-grounded hope in Christ for a better life, even that hope that is as an Anchor, sure and stedfast, cast within the Vail, where our Fore-runner is for us entred. *Yea,* (said he) *that better hope, by which we draw nigh unto God.* And bid him be of good chear; *Rest would be more sweet to him, when he entered into it, by all the toyle he met with in the way.*

Then he groaned, and said, *He was groaning after Liberty.* Yea, saith his Friend, a Liberty that tarrieth not for man, nor waits for the sons of men. *No,* (sayes he) *it is as a dew from the Lord, 'tis a glorious liberty.*

On the same day, attempting to repose, A Friend seeing him very ill, said, Oh! my dear Brother, Must we part? He said, *Yes, he thought so, though it may be but for a little time, to meet again with more advantage.*

But said the Friend, Alas, how dark are the Providences still, taking away the best, and leaving the poorest and neediest, for the day and duties of it. To whom he answered, *Lay not much stress upon that,*

that, the work is not yours but Gods, he will provide, only will vary his methods as pleaſes him; look therefore to him, and thoſe that are with you, Heb. 12. 22.

He then asked a Friends advice, about ſome Phyſical adminiſtrations, whereto was replied, Oh! my dear Brother, you know my weakneſs to adviſe in any caſe, and much more in theſe I ſo little underſtand; that ſhould you practiſe any thing as my advice, in competition with others, and miſcarry in it, I ſhould not be able to ſtand under it, though I have this witneſs with me, that the beſt advice I have, I would gladly give; and were it better, I would more readily give it in any caſe; but my weakneſs every way is not unknown to you. He replied, *It might not be meet for us to ſpeak of each other, what might otherwiſe be ſaid, having both our fears each way, leſt we ſhould ſpeak more than is meet; but he hoped we had both our witneſs in that matter, ſince our coming together, and that we have carried it to each other in uprightneſs of Spirit and truth of Affection, for which we had both occaſion to bleſs the Lord for favour therein afforded; and for advice deſired in the caſe propounded, he ſhould not further put any ſuch burden upon him.*

To another Friend about him, He ſaid, *Alas, what care is there generally and particularly among perſons to conform to the faſhions of the world; But, Oh! let our eyes be upon Jeſus in oppoſition thereunto, and in that path of the Lord, the God of Love and Peace ſhall be with us. Then breaking out into holy Admonitions on that word,* 1 Cor. 2. 9. *of the greatneſs which Eye had not ſeen, Ear heard, nor had entered into the Heart of man to conceive.* And ſaid,

Oh!

Oh! as you love your souls, press, press on, and after it with all your might, and keep close to the Lord and his paths in pursuit of it, though these wayes be every where spoken against.

Upon a First-Day of the Week, in the morning, he began to speak to all in the Family with him, one after another, as follows.

Ah! Sister A. *the Lord gave you a heart to own, and profess him, his Name, and Wayes early, when they were wayes every where spoken against, and since you have held up and out the Profession thereof, in a flourishing day, and now are concerned, in, and with the same, in this hour of temptation, which I beseech you be not affrighted, nor offended at: You know how it fared with our Lord and Master, whom the Religious as well as the Prophane world persecuted, and expelled their Coasts; the Servant is not above his Master. It is true, you have had the Name of a Gentlewoman, and of being descended of great Parantage, and raised to great things in a worldly account; but keep these all under-foot, as you ought, and let that be the song still,* Worthy is the Lamb to receive Power and Riches, Wisdom and Strength, Honour and Glory, and Blessing. *Oh! give up all to him, as* Auranah *of old, as a King to a King, so let the Offering be given up cheerfully, and resignedly intirely to him.*

I bless God, I have learned something of this in conversing with you, of your readiness and freeness heretofore, and now to lay out for the Lord; and though I now go the way of all flesh, yet you know in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that we have none of us cause to be sorry, or repent for what we have laid out for the Lord. And you for your part have heretofore entertained Saints, yea, it may be Angels unawares

the Lord reward you for it; and the God, under whose wings you are come to trust, be your great reward; but Oh! take heed, your Good be not evil spoken of, and that your Table become not a trap, nor what was provided for good, turn to your hurt. I desire the Lord Jesus may teach you to look carefully about you, that you lose not the things you have wrought, but receive a full reward. I remember it's said of Abel, *who* though dead, he yet speaketh; *and have thought that word in a bad sense, looking at me, and many others, who, while living, have been but dead Speakers; but I am now hasting to another kind of death, where after Worms have consumed this flesh and bones, yet I may be brought forth as a living speaking Witness in these words of mine, against such as slight the instruction of them.* Then said, *I bless the Lord for ever, that he hath kept me from Hell & horror, to hope of Salvation, eternal Salvation by Jesus Christ, and that I shall be helpt, in my poor measure, to shew forth his praise in this Generation, as well as to every one that is to come.*

Oh Friends! you are like yet to have opportunities amongst living Saints that speak livingly and audibly. Oh! take heed, take heed this present dispensation, that you yet are, and I have been trusted with; be not as the Lord's Trumpet, sounding an Alarum against you, on the behalf of the Lord of Hosts, whose words have not been received by you.

Then speaks of *England*, and sayes, *Oh! poor* England, *sinful* England, *who stonest the Prophets, and choice men that are sent unto thee, but wouldest not hear in this thy day, the things that appertain unto thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes. Thou hast had an Iron Sinew and brow of Brass, and*

wouldst

wouldst not be gathered to the great Shepherd and Bi-
ſhop of Souls. Ah England! England! *What would*
many Kings, and Princes, and Righteous men have
given to have enjoyed, one of thoſe bleſſed dayes of the
Son of God, which thou haſt ſinned away, and rendred
thy ſelf unworthy of? Oh! how art thou become a
place of Perſecution, treading and trampling down,
God, his Name, and Concerns, as much as in thee
lyes!

But, Oh! there is yet a Remnant according to the
Election of Grace, whom the Lord hath yet ſeen good
to winnow till he hath driven each grain of Corn from
other; yet be of good chear, you that are wholly a right
Seed, abide with God, and know aſſuredly you are more
precious in his ſight than Gold of Ophir; *and lay this*
Cordial by it, that the World is not worthy of you, yet
judges you unworthy of it; but there is a day coming,
even the day of Jezerel, *the ſeed of God ſhall have a*
day for it, in which the Righteous ſhall flouriſh, and
abundance of Peace, as long as the Moon endures.
That word hath been ſweet to me many times, Pſal. 72.
19. *And let the whole Earth be filled with his Glory,*
Amen, *and* Amen. *The Prayers of* David, *the Son of*
Jeſſe, *are ended. Oh! methinks here is an ending*
of Prayer indeed, Compriſing the whole Glory of the
great David *in this ſhort requeſt, that is the compleat*
end of all Prayer, calling worthily for Amen, *and*
Amen, *to cloſe it up.*

Then ſpeaks to all in the Room, ſaying, *I charge*
you all in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, and as you will
ever anſwer it at that great day, that you make Reli-
gion your buſineſs, and that you make not Godlineſs a
ſlight thing, nor walking with God a ſmall matter, as
ever

ever you hope to ſtand with boldneſs before God in the judgement.

Then he ſaid, *God indeed hath took ſtrength from theſe Arms of mine. I ſpeak it not as if I murmured at it, or by way of diſcouragement, as if he could not, if it pleaſe him, raiſe dead bones, and of ſtones make Children to* Abraham, *deſires that they would lift up his arms, which they did, and then he layes this ſolemne Charge upon them, and deſires, they would by lifting and holding up his hands, be witneſs to it, as his Charge to all of them, That they make it their great buſineſs, the remaining part of their dayes to walk, to the praiſe and glory of the Lord Jeſus, in all the paths of his pleaſure.*

His Siſter being troubled to ſee how he ſpent himſelf in ſpeaking; He ſaid to her, *Come Siſter, is this becoming to cry over a dead Dog, when by dying he may glorifie God the more.* And added, *I am here yet among the Living, though with many marks of death upon me; yet nothing with infallible certainty with me, that I ſhall die at this time; but, Oh! look up from me to the Lord, that ſo, that whether I live or die, your Intereſt may be ſure in the Lord Jeſus; and now the Lord watch between me and every one of you, when we ſhall be apart one from the other.*

Then ſpeaking to his Brother *A.* ſaid, *My dear Brother, the God of* Jacob, *the reſtorer of the dry ſcattered bones of* Iſrael, *ſhine forth from between the Cherubims of Glory on thy dear ſoul, diſperſing and diſpelling all Clouds, Foggs, and Feares, under which thou haſt been long ſerving God, with many tears and temptations many a day, of which I have been Eye and Ear witneſs; and the God that hath hitherto kept us alive to this day, cauſe all thoſe clouds to flee away,*

and

and bring out your ſoul yet more fully, not only to find pitty from him to eſcape the ſnares that others are catcht in, to their hurt ; but grant alſo, that you may come forth as one of thoſe Palm-bearers, cloathed in white, Rev. 7. 9. *as having gotten the victory over all Enemies, and made to ſing with grace in your heart, as they,* verſ. 10. Salvation to our God which ſits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb. *And the love extended by you to me unworthy, and in me to my Lord and Captain of my Salvation : Oh ! that ſtreams of Salvation may come forth, if it be his bleſſed will, from him to you ; ſo alſo make you a bleſſed pattern of Piety, Purity, and Stability for him, whom I deſire to ſerve in the Goſpel.*

His Siſter asked, Will you have ſome Cordial ? He ſaid, *Oh ! when ſhall I drink of that good new Wine in my Father's Kingdom ?*

In a morning, his Friend asked him, What of the Night ? He ſaid, *It hath been a long Night.* But ſaith his Friend, The Morning comes ; *Yea* (ſaid he) *as a ſnare on it, comes ſtealing upon the world ; but the Children of the Day, and of the Light, that have on the Armour of Light, ſhall have no cauſe to fear.*

He Exhorted a good Woman, that watched with him, with all earneſtneſs, to cloſe walking with the Lord.

His Siſter ſaid to him, I hope Brother, as your Tribulations abound, your Conſolations abound : He ſaid, *It was a hard queſtion, Conſolations being very inward deep things.*

She then asked how he felt his Heart ? He replied, *I feel the fleſhly parts declining apace, but I truſt the ſpiritual renewing.*

But saying further to his Sister, *Come, are you willing to part with me yet?* She answered, Yes, in some measure, she hoped she was, considering his pains on the one hand, and the glory that should follow. Then said he, *Be careful, I charge you, to walk close with God in your generation; and take heed of departing from his wayes, but walk as becomes a Christian, that would be found to his praise.*

After this, through extremity of pains, the exercise of his Understanding was at seasons interrupted; but very sensible and spiritual in his Intervals.

One asked him, How it was with him? He said, *Under great rebukes from the Lord, by reason of sin;* Saying, *I have been a wretched sinner, have perverted my way, and my walks with God have been short, and formal; But, Oh! that it may go well with* Israel *in the latter dayes, though I be as reprobate silver, because the Lord hath rejected me.*

It was told him, If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous, who is the Propitiation for our sins: *Yea,* saith he, *through Faith in his Blood; he is so, and thither doth my soul flee.*

He was also cautioned, to take heed of casting away any his Confidence, that hath great recompence of reward, and of making a judgement of things, in an hour of temptation and tribulation, contrary to another judgement made and confirmed by the Lord again and again to him heretofore, minding him, how the Tempter waited such seasons to disturbe him, and drive him from the strength he had laid up for him in Grace, that is in Christ Jesus, when Grace in us may be but at a low ebb. *Yea,* (replyed he) *I*

would leave this Exhortation with you, that when God bruises, breaks, treads down a poor soul, and it lyes before him as ashamed and confounded, and not able to open its mouth; Oh! then to look up to the Lord, for then will the Tempter be busie at such seasons; for we are not ignorant of his devises; but if God give another day, and more strength, I hope to speak more convincingly of these things.

The next day being asked, How it was with him? Whether all were clear within? He said, *It was very tempestuous round about; but yet the Lord is instructing and answering such a poor worm from the secret place of thunder*; And afterward sayes, *It will be better, and there is hope in the end for all this.* And then broke out with admiration, saying, He is ever mindful of his Covenant, Holy and Reverent is his Name, *he is a God near to those that fear him in the needful season.*

Sometimes after, one saying to him, I hope you can yet say God is good, and a strong hold in the day of trouble, and knows them that trust in him: *Yes, I can say so, blessed be my God; but not alike at all times can I say so; but I remember the counsel and advise yesterday, to wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and my place, appointed me by God, which I desire to do all the dayes of my appointed time, till my change come, though flesh and blood suggest, this is hard work, and would make haste out of it.*

In the morning following, being asked, How is it now? He said, *God had been at work closely with his Spirit, in the three dayes past before this, though this was left him for support, That the foundation of God remains sure to all his sealed ones; but* (sayes he) *I have been ready to say, Why should I speak of sealed ones,*

ones, being such a one, as might for mine iniquities be sealed up to a day of Wrath, and be kept in chains of Darkness to the great day. I have been so foolish, to think my attainments were such, as if I were got to the top, and needed little more: but the Lord hath laid Judgement to the Line, and Righteousness to the Plummet, and hath not only thrown down the high raised Structure, but razed the very foundations of all fleshly glory and excellency; and the Lord hath delivered his glory into Captivity, and his strength into the Enemies hand, yet hath not left me without hope, I trust, good hope in mercy, that all notwithstanding shall issue well in the end.

But, Oh! the reproach that I have brought on the Name of God! might that be done away by all I feel and suffer inward and outward, I shall rejoyce.

In the After-noon, the same day, it was said to him, I have observed by some hints from you, That you have in these few dayes past, had some exercises on your Spirit, I would be glad to know whence and what they were, and the way of God with you in them. He replyed, *He had indeed some such exercise, occasioned by close searches made in his soul, about the clear and certain right and title it had to a substantial well-founded Interest in Christ, which though* (sayes he) *I have mentioned heretofore to you, and others, what it was, and how it was, the Lord had begot and carried on in me; and thought it had been above questions, yet had I some doubts and fears renewed of a very ancient date, about, if not above thirty years ago, with many miscarriages since to promote the same matter; and this coming in a time of such weakness, and when by the working of my Spleen, which sent up dark and disturbing vapours, clouding*

my imagination, and made sore work within; but the Lord made me see much of my own fleshly glorying, as also others in me, and in my flesh, which God would take down in this day of tryal, when every ones work must be tryed of what sort it is, even by fire; and truly I was made to see to my shame, much hypocrisie and formality in my converse with the Lord in one respect or other, and that the Practical part of Religion I had yet arrived to little acquaintance with, to what I had in dayes past; but this brought me in the issue, to see, that I was, what I was, that was good, only by grace, and no room for flesh to glory, but was brought through grace to experience this Truth, that when I am weak, then am I strong; and that however it be, yet the Lord forgetteth not his poor, nor despiseth not his prisoners; this is a brief account of the Way God led me in, in this matter, and hath so issued it, that I trust through grace, I shall yet come to lay down my weary head and heart in the peace of Gods speaking, that will keep and carry me to the end.

His Friend told him here, somewhat of the danger of attempting such great works, under such disadvantages as these seasons and circumstances he had in these dayes past been under, for such works as these, minding to him, That every season was not a fit season, for judgement especially, to be calling in question, things so long and often under more clear light, and leadings, confirmed formerly; and however that be a great Truth, that every day will yet more demonstrate, that we are but yet Children in Christianity, far short of that manly state of things to which the present dispensation of God, both publick and personal, have a proper and true tendency, towards which more excellent way, 'tis our duty to be pressing,

ſing, yet ſo to be preſſing towards it, as to remember both how we have heard, and received, and hold faſt the beginning of our confidences, firm unto the end, that ſo the Tempter get not advantage againſt us, as he doth, or may do againſt perſons ignorant of his devices: But he, being ſtill weak, either to ſpeak or hear, more was not ſaid, but that he, his Friend, was glad to ſee the Lord had iſſued the matter ſo well, to the Preventing the Tempters deſign, and giving his poor Servants to ſee, how great that mercy is of all the Saints and their concerns, being in Gods hand; when the ſtrength of our own hands, heads, and hearts fails ſo frequently as they do, yet he remains the ſame for ever, and in ſuch ſeaſons, ſecretly ſuccours, and ſupports, and at laſt brings out into a wealthy place, to his own praiſe, and encouragement of the poor and needy, to truſt in him at all times.

In the morning, ſuppoſing him drawing near his end, a Friend was called to him, who finding him diſcompoſed again in his head, and convulſive motions renewed, with ſhortneſs of breath; yet ſoon after, asking how he did? He ſaid, *He was a wonder unto many by reaſon of the rebukes of God upon him, but the Lord was, and he hoped would be his ſtrong refuge to the end.*

His Friend told him, He had made known himſelf to him as a ſtrong hold in this day of trouble hitherto, elſe he had ſunk under his afflictions; but to be kept up and carried on under ſuch great long exerciſes, juſtifying God ſtill, and bleſſing him, in giving as well as taking, ſpake much of divine ſupport given in. *Yea* (ſayes he) *I would not only juſtifie, but have great reaſon to glorifie God, as the God of my ſalvation.*

It was answered, His present posture of submission and subjection to him as the Father of Spirits, was a notable way of glorifying God in the fire, and giving praise to him in the Isle of the Sea. And after a little pause, He added, *He had now but a few steps more to go, which he desired the Lord would also so order, as he might not be left to sin against him; and blessed the Lord, that he had given him, and yet maintained such good hope, through Grace in him, that he was not, and hoped he should not fear to follow him, through the valley of the shadow of death, to which he now seemed hastning.*

A Friend coming to him, and asking him, How doth this honest Watch-man? *Honest Watch-man* (saith he) *hath much in it, to be a Watchman indeed, looking out for the morn, as the Watchman of Ephraim, that was with his God, when other watchmen are as the Prophet is said to be,* Hosea 9. 8. A snare of a Fowler in all their wayes, and hatred in the house of their God, *as is too evident of the Watchmen of our day, by reason of deep defilements found amongst them; wherefore the day of the Watchman cometh, yea maketh haste, now shall be their perplexity, and the dayes of their visitations are come, the dayes of recompences are come,* Israel *shall know it; for the Lord's dispensations are now very swift.*

Being asked, How he had done to Night? He said, *I laid me down to sleep, and waked again; for the Lord sustained me, and hath not made this night a night of terror, by affrightning dreams and imaginations, as sometimes; but I seem to be going on as a weary traveller his way.*

Sometimes after, being asked, How he did? He said, *A poor weak creature.* It was answered, But

truſt in the Lord you have ſtrength. *Yea* (ſaid he) *bleſſed be God, everlaſting ſtrength, and they that indeed truſt in him ſhall be as Mount* Zion *that cannot be moved, but abideth for ever; for as the Mountains are round about* Jeruſalem, *ſo is the Lord about his People for ever.*

A Friend telling him, There was an acquaintance of his come to ſee him, who was going to Preach amongſt the poor Saints abroad; *He wiſhed him proſperity in that good work*; ſaying, *He never found cauſe to repent of any of his working dayes for Chriſt, in his life-time.*

At the ſame time, one coming from far to viſit him, and telling him, He had dear Remembrances from many Friends of his, who in a way of ſupplication, with humble ſubmiſſion, were looking to the Lord, the God of all Conſolation, concerning him, and his caſe. He replyed, *He is indeed the God of all Conſolation, of ſtrong Conſolations, which were ſealed up to his ſoul.*

And then added, *I am very much affected with this ſurpriſing viſit of yours:* And ſoon after ſaid to the ſame Friend, *He had in the two Nights paſt, been graciouſly led, and let into the underſtanding of that Word,* Pſal. 37. 37. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, the end of that man is peace; *So as he was never let into it in like manner before.*

A Friend ſaying, How doth my Brother? He replyed, *I cannot ſay of you, as he of old, You took your Brother by the heel in the womb, but hope we ſhall take one another by the hand in Heaven, and that both of you* (intending the Friend that came to viſit him) *will live & love as Brethren,* or words to this purpoſe, as near as could be gathered; for now ſpeech failed.

Then ſpeaking of the preſſures that were upon him, he was adviſed, to look to the Lord, who in depths of Wiſdom adminiſtred them, managing all Circumſtances about them, as alſo to eye Chriſt, the Captain of our Salvation, who endured ſore travel, yea, bruiſing from his Father alſo, as knowing he ought to ſuffer ſuch things, and ſo to enter into glory; and the Spirit ſpake of the Sufferings of Chriſt, and the Glory that ſhould follow. He replyed, *Oh! that Glory, that Glory on the other ſide.*

Calling for drink, and the Maid bringing it him, he deſired a Friend preſent might give it, who coming to him, ſaid, You appear now, as one that is ſhortly to drink new Wine in the Kingdom of the Father. He anſwered, *Though many have greater marks of Faith than I have, yet I am aſſured I ſhall be received into fellowſhip with the Father, Son, Spirit, and all Saints.* And looking earneſtly on the Friend, ſaid, *If it pleaſe God to renew ſtrength, he ſhould give good evidence, that he loved that Friend dearly, and all Saints.*

A little after, the ſame Friend acquainted him of two dear Friends of his in *London*, that deſired particularly to be remembred to him; and were much exerciſed in fellowſhip with his preſent tryal. He being very weak, replyed, *I can ſay little; but I pray God they may be ſtrengthned with all might and power in the inward man, to hold out to the end, according to his glorious power.*

Being asked by another, How he did? He ſaid, *My heart begins to fail, I now feel.* But after ſaid, *Bleſſed be God for Chriſt's Grace and eternal Glory.*

Soon after he broke out into fervent earneſt Prayer, 1ſt. *Deeply lamenting* Iſrael's *dealing falſely with G*

in his Covenant. 2dly. *Speaks forth with great clearneſs his faith, that God would make the deciſion between real and pretended Saints; and that God would abide with thoſe that abode with him, greatly encouraging ſuch as found grace to ſtand in this hour of temptation; Concluded, committing himſelf, Soul and Body, to the Lord for keeping and carrying to the end.*

At another time, in like manner, in great zeal and fervency, implored the Lord to make the deciſion between the true Seed of Iſrael, *and pretenders, who had dealt falſely with the Lord, under ſhew of much love.*

Then beggs, *If God had any thing for him to ſpeak, he would communicate and enable to it; and that if* Abraham's *work were done, that he would ſay to him, with that clearneſs and evidence, as he might underſtand it,* Thou haſt fought a good fight, haſt kept the Faith, henceforth is laid up for thee a Crown which God the Judge of all ſhall give thee.

A while after, and but three hours before his diſſolution, a Friend perceiving him under great preſſures, ſpake ſoftly to him, They looked unto the Lord and were lightned. A right look will bring down relief under all difficulties. *Yea,* replyed he, with ſtrength aud earneſtneſs, *And their faces were not aſhamed.* Thence forward he ſpoke not; but in a few hours after (it being the 5th day of the firſt Month, 1668.) yielded up his Spirit, falling aſleep without pang, or conſiderable groan.

FINIS.

Copies and Extracts
OF
LETTERS
Written on ſeveral occaſions
BY
That Deceaſed Servant of CHRIST, The *Author* of the fore-going Diſcourſes.

Printed in the Year, 1668.

A Book that he approved (being the work of an other) containing Inſtructions for Children, he ſent ſeveral of them to ſome of his Acquaintance, accompanied with this Letter to their Parents.

Unto my dearly beloved Brethren, Siſters, and Friends, whom the Lord hath intruſted with the overſight of Families, Children, and Servants; abundance of the Spirit of Glory, and of God is deſired. ——

Endeared in the Lord!

UNder the ſtrong obligations of bounden duty, which my Father hath been pleaſed to lay upon me of ſerving the Intereſt of your Souls, and theirs whom God hath given you, to my uttermoſt; it hath been not the leaſt part of my ſtudy in this School of Inſtruction, unto which he hath ſent me, how I might at this diſtance moſt effectually attend, and be found therein, as one that muſt give an account, not only of the Law of my Relations, but alſo of theſe fruits thereof on your hands,

hands, which have extended and abounded to me-ward in un-interrupted tender love and sympathy, as well in this my chain, as in the many years of my weak endeavours to serve Christ among you in liberty; in requital whereunto, as I can do little at most, so am I often inwardly checked and rebuked for my sinful shortness toward you, both in general and particular, from soul to soul; and very lately it hath been with more than ordinary weight on me to exercise pitty and compassionate thoughtfulness on those Families of yours, both Children and Servants, many of which the Lord hath multiplied like a Flock, whose particular affections (as far as they have been capable to express them) I have been at a loss how to recompence or improve to their advantage; but having been advising with some of my Companions here, as well as laying the matter before him, who is able to give seed to the sower, and multiply with blessing the seed sown; I have herewithal attempted to make an Essay for enterance with them, in presenting to them this upright plain Address, prepared to my hand by some one of the Lord's Prisoners, full of bowels toward such young subjects, consisting of such proper matter, and brought forth in such a condescending Spirit and Language, as I trust by the blessing of the Lord will find good acceptance and success among such souls. —— My present Writing therefore with it, is not so much to crave its acceptance in good part by them, for of that I have much assurance; but to lay hold of this opportunity, to desire your faithful following the design of it, by stirring up your selves, and zealously and unweariedly doing your endeavour with all your wisdom, interest and might, behaving your selves among them as Men and Wo-

men

men of knowledge, that your account of their ſouls (as mine account of yours) may be given up with joy and not with grief: Here am I, and the Children and Servants which thou haſt graciouſly given me; unto which faithfulneſs of yours, (beſides many other weighty Arguments that might be urged) the very remembrance of the dayes being ſo very evil, may afford you (as it hath me) many forcible motives.

1. Theſe are dayes wherein you know not how ſuddenly you may be hurried, pluck'd, and ſeparated from them, not only by death, which climbeth up at the windows in moſt Families this ſickly ſeaſon; but by the violence of the Sons of Men, through the wiſe ordering of God, who are permitted to make and execute Laws which have direct threatnings, and a preſent tendency that way, toward ſuch as you, who ſtand in a profeſſion of Chriſt's, which teſtifieth that their works are evil. This rage hath already invaded and uncovered ſome Families among you, and multitudes in other places; and all ſuch as will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, muſt expect the like, not as if ſome ſtrange thing hapned to them, and therefore ſhould be in daily preparation to make and leave their own; ſuch as are inſtructed and have learned to truſt in God, and to own and improve a Relation for themſelves in him, according to their capacity, which may make an abundant ſupply to this lack or loſs of your company and ſociety, which will turn to their great bleſſing, and help to your confident and comfortable ſurrendring them up to the Lord in a way of following him, whitherſoever he goeth, and may call or diſpoſe of you.

2. Theſe

2. These are times in which a more than ordinary disadvantage and danger is designed to spoyl and destroy both Infants and Youth; not only in respect of their Schooling, which must be carried on by such Tutors, and under such Rules, as tend to tempt and subject them to suck-in the Principles of that Apostasie and misery that the former years have been delivered from; or else can hardly make any procedure in Learning requisite to accomplish them. But principally are they exceeding liable to danger and destruction (if the Lord wonderfully prevent not) by means of their unavoidable company and converse with other youths of their growth and degree, the which generally is become everywhere so wanton, wicked, debauched, through the looseness of the times, and the countenance that all filthiness finds, where it ought to be punished and restrained, that unless your Children and Servants be, through a blessing on your Prayers and Endeavours, in-laid with good Principles in awakened Conscience, followed with constant Instruction, and an exemplary Conversation, with a wise, moderated, steady discipline, it will be a marvellous thing if they be not utterly spoiled, become a scourge and torment to you, and at length repent that ever they saw you, and perish in the gain-sayings of this wicked and adulterous generation.

3. The dayes that have passed over you, have been dayes of the Lord's wonderful Salvations, and the stretching forth of his Arm in these Nations to do marvellous things toward the getting himself a glorious Name. The putting away the remembrance of which from under Heaven, and razing out of all the marks and monuments thereof, is the manifest de-

sign

ſign of the wicked men of this generation. —The memory whereof, as it alwayes ought to be dear to you, who have been bleſſed in thoſe Salvations, and have ſung his praiſe ; So ſhould it be your great care to preſerve the ſame, by teaching and inſtructing thoſe committed to your charge therein, and that not only in the Hiſtory and Letter of them (the very memory whereof will be famous in the ages to come) but eſpecially in the inward Principles, Springs, and Spirit of them, as well as the iſſues whereunto they were by the Lord intended, that yours may be able to tell the generations to come, and the people uncreated may praiſe the Lord. Which things your off-ſpring will only be capable to underſtand, and ſutably to comply with the Lords motions and deſigns therein, when they ſhall be ſpiritually inſtructed in, and experimentally acquainted with the way and operations of the Lord on the Spirits of his People, to which your utmoſt diligence is indiſpenſibly required, as ever you would glorifie God in your generation.

4. Moreover, you generally profeſs your ſelves to be ſuch as expect glorious dayes to ſucceed the deep tryals that are (or are coming on) upon the heritage of the Lord ; and do you not wiſh ſo well to your own, as to do what in you lies, that they ſhould have a ſhare in that Salvation which your ſelves have profeſſed, longed, prayed, laboured, ſuffered for ? And how think you, will they be capable of bearing that glory (or ſuppoſe there be yet a reſerve of tryals for them that are to uſher it in) which will be very full of power, and purity, unleſs they be indeed brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, inſtructed in Chriſt, as the Truth is in him ;

and from a ſellowſhip in his Spirit, brought within the compaſs of the rich and glorious Promiſes, which ſhall manifeſt and convey the bleſſed things unto the Ages to come, that inſtead of the Fathers may be the Children.

5. Add hereunto, that the force and violence of this evil time is ſuch as doth drive you frequently, and may yet be expected to drive you more from your ſtated ſeaſons on the firſt dayes of the Week, and other times, of following the Lord in thoſe ſolemn publick Appointments and Inſtitutions of the Goſpel, unto your Family retirements, at leaſt a great part of your time in thoſe dayes, the which affords you more enlarged opportunities than you had formerly, to teach and inſtruct your own houſhoulds, great and ſmall, according to their capacity, in the things of the Kingdom; to the which you are concerned to give all heed, diligence, and indeavour; not in any neglect of opportunities in the Aſſemblies of the Saints, while they do continue, or may be had; but when there is an interval, the ſolemn exerciſes in the Church being ended, or when through force and fury they ſhall (if the Lord ſhall permit them to) be ſo utterly broken, as you ſhould be reduced again to that ancient way of the Saints, being governed as in *Abrahams* and the *Patriarchs* time in Family-Worſhip. You are, I ſay, ſo much the more concerned to ſet your ſelves vigorouſly to this work of endeavouring, that your houſes may become as ſo many Churches of Chriſt in reſpect of that Inſtruction, reading the Scriptures, Praying, gracious Converſation, Diſcipline, exemplary Walking in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs, which ought to be profeſſed and maintained in beauty, ſet in majeſty among them, and in this

ſenſe

ſenſe to be ſetting your houſes in order, for you know not how ſoon theſe very ſtaves of beauty and bands may be violently invaded, diſturbed, and broken by the ſame ſpirit of hatred, which now offers force to your more ſolemn Aſſemblings: While therefore you have this price in your hand, this undiſturbed opportunity, you ſhould be doing this good.

I hope I need not largely follow theſe with other Arguments, which might be drawn out at length from the ineſtimable value of their immortal ſouls, the redemption whereof is precious, which now are committed to your care and over-ſight, and will be ſtrictly required at your hands, in the day of Accompts that draweth nigh; and that the rather, for that now is their making of marring time, which effects you may expect will, and frequently do follow, according as you either are found in the due and diligent diſcharge of your duty among them, or are negligent and remiſs therein. Little it is conſidered and laid to heart, how much of the intereſt of your preſent peace, and the comfort of your lives is laid up in your wife, conſtant, gracious endeavour of this kind, and the Lord's bleſſing thereupon. Whereas, on the contrary, it were well if the common reproach upon the Name of the Lord were altogether groundleſs; and that it were not too evidently to be ſeen in many Families of Profeſſors, that their Children and Servants are as rude, untaught, incorrigible, wanton, wicked, unruly as any others, as if the only care upon thoſe entruſted with the Headſhip of Families, were (and that hardly performed as it ought to be) to have them brought forth, and brought up to *Adam* (or to Earth rather) to learn their Books, Complements, Manners, and Trades; but to underſtand

themſelves, to learn Chriſt, to know the Lord God of their Fathers, to be inſtructed in the Holy Scriptures from their youth up, to know themſelves miſerable without a Saviour, and to be led as by the hand unto him. Oh! how rare are theſe attainments, and that becauſe endeavours are ſo ſlack in order thereunto; I pray you examine your ſelves, your prayers, your practices, your converſations, where are the bowels of Chriſt towards your own! Do you travel in birth *again* for them till he be formed in them? Should it not be much more your care to ſee them Saints, than to ſee them men and women? Alas! if you Families (who would bear the World in hand, that there is ſome excellent thing among you more than others) be not taught the fear of the Lord, where do you think a Seed ſhould be reared up to ſerve him, that in the ſtead of the Fathers ſhould be the Children accounted with God for a generation? Among worldly men it may not be expected, whoſe Children are ordinarily the off-ſpring of their luſt, the painted Idols of the rich and pinching burdens of the Poor, and their Servants the meer drudges to promote the Intereſt of their eaſe, gain and covetouſneſs, few enquiring or caring what becomes of their immortal precious ſouls; The manifeſt ruines upon whom (unleſs the Lord work extraordinarily upon them) ſhould provoke us to pitty them and be the more jealous over our own concernments herein, in order hereunto ſuffer this further word of Exhortation.

Make it (I beſeech you) your main buſineſs to ſet before them the pattern of a ſtanding, even, ſerious, holy converſation. Families do uſually receive faſter and

and deeper the impreſſion of the ſimilitude of their diſpoſitions and behaviour, who have the over-ſight, and government of them, than of their meer precepts and exhortations. The Majeſty and Authority which God hath entruſted and inveſted you with among them, is only held up in its enamouring beauty and convincing power, while you improve it much in the fear of God, neither debaſing it on the one hand by a vain, fond, frothy lightneſs in your ſpirits and carriage toward or before them, or exerciſing it by a proud, furious, imperious, domineering over them on the other hand. Much ſpiritual wiſdom lyes in your tempering and mixing a ſweet affable behaviour without vanity, with a grave reproving demeanour without fierceneſs, and this not in an affected appearance, but in truth; nor only at uncertain fits and flaſhes, but in a conſtant fixed frame, within doors, and without. Conſider alſo you have in their ſight taken up an high and holy Profeſſion of the Cauſe and Inſtitutions of Chriſt, and thoſe about you are likely to be ſomeway intereſted in the ſufferings you are threatned to ſuſtain, for your adhering faithfully thereunto, in reſpect whereof it will be their happineſs, that you hold faſt (in their eye and as their example) theſe truths in a pure Conſcience, to which you have begun to witneſs, not only for the Truths ſake themſelves, which deſerve that you ſhould deliver them to the next generation, unmixed and unbetrayed by you; but for your own dear Relations ſake alſo, before whom it would be ſad, ſhould you lay ſuch a ſtumbling-block in the beginning of their way, as doth beſpeak (ſo loud as you can proclaim it) that there is no ſuch thing as Truth, worth your adhering to in a day of tryal, and conſequently

worth their enquiring after, imbracing or engaging themſelves in, in times of ſuch perſecution. I hope better things of you, and ſuch as accompany Salvation, though thus I write, truſting that you either do, or will do the things which I deſire (or rather the Lord requires) of you; to whom I leave you, and reſt,

Yours, many wayes obliged, to love and ſerve you for Chriſt's ſake.

To a Friend in a time of great uncertainties, as to publick Tranſactions

A ſpiritual underſtanding of the times, and what *Iſrael* ought to do, be granted largely to you. —

Holy and Beloved!

I *Think yours of the* 9th *and* 16th *inſtant, are both of date later than my laſt to you; by which you may eaſily perceive my aptneſs to tire in proſecuting divine advantages: At preſent I was willing to have followed you cloſer, but that my frequent little Journeys have of late prevented me. How faithful is that Word! and verified to a thouſand generations,* Whoſo is wiſe, and ſhall *obſerve* theſe things, even they ſhall underſtand the loving kindneſs of the Lord. —*And that —none of the* wicked *ſhall underſtand, but the* wiſe *ſhall underſtand. If ever there was a time to have the eye of Saints kept very intent upon the Lord to trace out his footſteps, it ſeems, now to be ſuch a time,*

time, when his Pavilion is darkneſs and fire enfolding it ſelf, to be then divinely enabled to read not only particular loving kindneſs ſealed up to the obſerver *in ſpecial, but to ſee the Salvation of* Iſrael *carried on in a ſtrait path, and that he that buildeth* Sion *worketh ſtill by line and plummet, is a grace beſtowed not in common in the Houſe of God; but is methinks one of the ſpecial love-tokens by which he will ſhew among all his Diſciples, who is the Beloved One that leans on his boſom, and that have the favour to ride in the Chariot, the midſt whereof is paved with Love for the Daughters of* Jeruſalem. —— *I may take up a juſt mournful Lamentation of my own ſhort-ſightedneſs, and incapacity (I had almoſt ſaid impoſſibility) to diſcern with any diſtinction of apprehenſion, the Temple of God open in Heaven, and in it the Ark of the Teſtament, while there proceedeth out of the Throne, and by means of the Cenſor caſt into the Earth, ſuch lightnings, and thundrings, and voices, and earth-quakes, and great hail. Only I durſt not ſay ſhort of this, the Lord giveth me now and than a glimps of the King in his Glory, and the Land that is very far off. And, ah then! how good is a* Piſgah-*ſight of* Canaan? *It's even as the Chariots that* Joſeph *ſent, that revived fainting* Jacob; *what life and ſignification it manifeſts to lie hid in ſuch a word as this,* —Yet God is good to Iſrael. — *Yet ſurely I know that it ſhall be well with them that fear God, that fear before him? With what a different power is a ſoul acted then in ſuch a requeſt,* Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, *from what it is when only in an uſual formal way it breatheth it out? Such tranſfigurations may well conſtrain an outcry,* It's good to be here, *though many times one knowes not what he ſayes.* —— *But alas! why ſpeak I,*

think I, long I so much for such sights and tastes which indeed, though precious, yet are transient? meanwhile not valuing as I should that substantial feeding and living upon Sions *lasting foundations, such as remain unshaken, though he bring us into the place of Dragons, and cover us with the shadow of death, though there be no fruit in the Vine, and the labour of the Olive cease, yet then to live above hope under hope, &c. have the Lord's joy remain in us, and our joy be full.*

Methinks all the Lord's footsteps point to us, that, as our proper lesson, To be securing all that which concerneth us upon such Foundations as cannot be shaken, when Heaven and Earth is moved, Foundations are destroyed, the Earth and all its Inhabitants dissolved, before the Lord, when he cometh; for he cometh to judge the Earth with Righteousness, and his People with Equity.

Yours, in special Relation,
and Affection.

To two of his Acquaintance Imprisoned.

Direct leadings to living Fountains of Water, and wiping all tears from your eyes, is desired.

Much Beloved!

I Salute you both in the same bowels, and with the same respect; although I have not much that I know of to communicate, that can add any thing to either of you, trusting (and in a measure tasting) that you are as on Eagles wings, carried beyond what

what my poor, dark, confused heart or hand can contribute to you in the force and fellowship of that blessed Word, 1 *Pet.* 4. 13, 14. And, as I trust you in a good measure, are, & so I am, by Grace, helped with many others in every Prayer of ours, to desire you further may be advantaged with those walks with God in the perfect liberty of Grace and Peace, that may make up abundantly your blessedness, not only in equality with, but in a way of surpassing and transcendency to their present priviledge, that have as yet opportunity allowed them to walk up and down about their Father's business. It is not a little or low ground of Consolation for you; and I pray that the power of it may still remain with you, which one was mentioning, that you are as really in the Cause and Business of the King, though you can do nothing but make Prayers for him, and bewail the dishonour done to his Majesty, as if you were in Field or Council for him. It is to one of you a state not unusual, I hope its to neither of you strange or unexpected; it cannot be but a little while at the longest run ere that Word will be made good on you in a most blessed sense, *Eccles.* 4. 14. and ere that be, I am by Grace perswaded, that (as you share in many more Prayers and direct personal remembrances than formerly, so also) that experience of *Pauls* will redound to your real Consolation, *Phil.* 1. 12, 13, 14. as verified, and is in part upon you. The dreadful and unexpected issue to which all things in appearance are reverting, beyond what we were willing to suppose the former Apostacy should, or indeed could extend unto, nay, beyond the hopes of those poor worms that are everywhere wallowing in the vomit of their own drun[illegible]nness, and belch out blasphemy; I trust

truſt will have with many, as I hope the conſideration of it hath begun to have with me its effects, to lead the Lord's people into a deeper ſearch after, and greater ſenſe of the Idols of Jealouſie that have provoked to this exceeding Jealouſie, in which the Lord ſeemeth not pleaſed to ſpare the giving his own Name, together with the memorial of all his Wonderful Works to be reproached, and as a by-word to the vileſt of men, and no one left that can ſay, Reſtore. Surely, though the perſonal iniquities be great and manifold that have been found in the skirts of the Lord's People, under their Profeſſion that they are Saints; yet do I believe there lies more combined, united, provoking guilt upon them unpurged, unrepented of, vindicated and pleaded for, conſidered as they are *Sioniſts*, and in their publick Relations. Ah! theſe *other men's ſins* are ſuch eating evils to ſuch as are in a ſort related to them, and yet in a ſeeming tolerable and excuſable ſenſe free from them, as for which, I am perſwaded not only the Land mourneth, but even *Sion* languiſheth, and her Children faint in the ſtreets, and yet few conſider where is the malignity of the diſeaſe, or declare the cauſes of baniſhment. True it is, ſome that I think honourably of, have profeſt the diſcovery, and a means for recovery of it; but truly I think with ſuch an hard and uneven hand have been the application, that I fear, though their good-will may be accepted of the Lord, yet in the iſſue they will prove Phyſitians not of that value, as may be expected from their Profeſſion in that reſpect. I am alſo in ſome hopes that the Lord is more effectually weaning his little Children from every Idol; to which, one after another, they are ſo apt to apply themſelves, though guilt and unholineſs

holineſs be in the bottom of it, how many a pitiful piece hath the Lord made manifeſt to be as *Coniah*, *Jer.22.28. a diſpiſed broken Idol, a veſſel wherein is no pleaſure*; and yet ſuch hath been the carnality of many, that they have been concluding, as they of this *Coniah*, Lam.4.20. —— When I have remembred all along that holy eſcape that the Lord helped you unto, when many other good men were entangled, and came not off, till their bones were broken; I have been made to rejoyce in that love and favour to you, that hath preſerved, and I hope reſerved you in a waiting Spirit, till he ſhould bring you forth among the ſons that ſhall comfort *Jeruſalem*, when ſhe ſees their wayes and doings concerning all the evil that hath been brought upon her, *Ezek.* 14. 22, 23. a paſſage that I read this morning, which it may be I underſtood not, that deſired Prayers might be made to the Lord in that behalf, encreaſed with holy jealouſie my cry, leſt any influence of that Word, *Iſa.* 51. 14. (which God forbid) ſhould light upon any of the dear Children of God, that are this day in bonds. I truſt the grace of Jeſus Chriſt will keep, guide, bleſs, and ſanctifie you both, and all that are as you, and when ever he liſts up your heads, it will be to ſee his reſerve of Wonders, that ſhall glorifie his Holy Name. — I am cut ſhort of enlargeing, unleſs my opportnnity of Convcyance were a little better known to me, for a moſt plentious ſupply of this defect, I ſhall return again to my travel in your behalf, that the Shepherd and Stone of *Iſrael* may undertake for you to keep you in perfect peace. Now to him, that after you have ſuffered a while, is of all power to keep you from falling, and to preſent

ſent you faultleſs before the preſence of his Glory with exceeding joy, to the only wiſe God our Saviour, be Glory and Majeſty, Dominion and Power, now and ever. *Amen.*

7th 3d *month*, 60.

Upon the death of ſome whom he honoured, to two of his Acquaintance then fellow-Priſoners.

The Lord ſend you help from his Sanctuary, and ſtrengthen you out of Sion.

Greatly Beloved!

I *Salute you both, as is meet in the Lord. Theſe two laſt Poſts I have not written any Letter to you, partly for that I have been out of Town ſome little journies, but principally having been much under the ſurprize that thoſe were,* Job 2. ult. *The voice indeed is loud, and as if ſeven Thunders had at once uttered their voices; the terribleneſs of it makes many ſhrink as* Eliah *into his den. When! Oh when ſhall we hear the ſtill ſoft Voice, and as men of underſtanding ſee his Name! We may well cry out, he hath ſhewn us hard things, and given us to drink the Wine of aſtoniſhment; which falls the heavier, in that ſuch who have obtained favour, to lay neareſt to heart the concernments of* Sion, *and to be therein aided with greateſt boldneſs and ſweeteſt intimacy near to the heart of Chriſt, and have had their Affections enflamed moſt with what they have ſought,*

ſought, and ſeemed to themſelves, and others, to have been of thoſe boſom intimates that know all that their Friend doth, and have hereupon ſpoken openly and without clouds, or reſervations, their confidence of things, that have appeared in the iſſue to be miſtakes; how ſome of them bear it, I do not well know; but ſure I am, the hand is very ſorely turned upon the little ones that believe in Chriſt, great is their aſtoniſhment, like that, Iſa. 51. 17. to the end. *I have often thought of them,* Acts 21. 4. Who ſaid to *Paul, by the Spirit,* that he ſhould not go up to *Jeruſalem. How like the language of our ſpirits (heightned by fervent affection, and attended with providential bringing to remembrance of ſutable Scriptures; and all this on a ſoul enjoying clear acceſs to the Lord) is, to the voice of the ſpirit in truth as he fulfils that Promiſe,* He ſhall take of mine and ſhew it unto you, and ſhall ſhew you things to come. *And if it may pleaſe the Father, after he hath graciouſly allayed the ſtormineſs of theſe perplexing waves, that at preſent doubtleſs diſcompoſe for any thing, to lead his holy ones into a more perfect diſcerning of things which in this kind do differ, and in mean time inſtruct to think more ſoberly of themſelves, and judge more tenderly of others; I ſhall yet hope this ſharp diſpenſation may bring out meat and ſweetneſs that we thought not of. —— As for the poor Martyrs themſelves, when I review what was of late ſaid of their particular perſwaſions, and how (when their departure was hid from them) they enjoyed ſuch un-interrupted joyful communion with the Lord, I cannot but admire the wiſdom and goodneſs of the Father, that took that courſe with them,* to anoint them for their burial *(but alas! they had no burial!) But much*

much more grace to admiration appears to me in it, that when their perſwaſions and expectations from the Lord in that point, gave way to his determinations, yet that at that very time the Tempter ſhould be bound up, who doubtleſs deſired to have them, that he might have winnowed them as Wheat, and would have made a great market of the leaſt diſcouragement upon them over the whole Antichriſtian World. Oh! how unſearchable are his wayes, and his works paſt finding out! *The deadly Treacle that you ſpeak of, will doubtleſs ſwiftly become a Cup of trembling to this wretched generation, and entayl the guilt of all down along from* Abel, &c. *A very ſtrange efficacy that it hath to cry and to prevail at length, though it tarry long firſt. That* Abels *was not anſwered and expiated in the Flood that deſtroyed the World of the ungodly; nor that of* Zacharias *(if it was his who ſaid,* The Lord look upon it, and require it, 2 *Chron.* 24. 22.) *But they both muſt cry againſt that generation that put to death the Lord of Life, and neither of theſe cryes expire at the ruines of them and their devaſtation to this day, but ſhall be found as freſh in out-cry againſt that great City where alſo our Lord is crucified,* Rev. 18. 24.

And though it's hard to diſcern, yet great is the prevalency of thoſe cryes of Saints that night and day follow the Lord herein, though he not only tarry long, but even ſeem to be angry with the Prayers of his People; that word hath ſweetly ſtayed me in this hour of temptation, Thou telleſt my wandrings, put my tears in thy bottle, are they not written in a Book by thee! *If their wanderings, ſtaggerings, be tenderly numbered, and their tears bottled, and their grouns booked, and all this* by thee! *a Book of remembrance*

before

before the Lord! We need not be so sollicitous what becomes of them, though they are above out of our sight, doubtless, when it comes to much Incense in the Angels hand, the Censor will be cast into the Earth, Rev. 8. 3, 4, 5.

Rests,

24. 8. *month*, 60.

Yours in tears.

Unto one who had acquainted him with the departing of some from their holy Professions.

The early visits of the bright and morning Star, be a light in your dark place, till the day dawn, and the shadows flee away.

Beloved in and of the Lord!

SInce my last, I have received yours, wherein you were pleased to remember, and send such a rich Token to your poor Friend, whom you are pleased to describe by that merry title of your Father; *who blesseth God for grace and support ministred, by tracking the footsteps of the Father of Spirits in those paths of peace and pleasantness, wherein he pleaseth to lead you, and others of his suffering ones, so contrary to the methods and expectation of men, whose breath are in their nostrils,*

strils, Job.22.29. Psal.41.8,12,13. *unto which I account it no diversion that he is pleased (as your last intimates) to keep you in an humble sense of the shortness of self-sufficiency, for bearing you up against the hour of temptation; the very fear whereof hath already cast down so many stars from their excellency, on whom this inscription is manifestly engraven, as a caution to us, though a by-word to scorners,* Lo this is the man that made not God his confidence. *Over whom as I have little ground to glory,* 1 Cor.10.12. Rom. 11.18,20. *so neither is there just occasion to be greatly offended,* Isa.2.22. 2 Tim.4.16,17,18. Joh.6. 66,67. chap.16.13,32. *Although I find it somewhat difficult to draw the memorial of their slips into a gracious perpetual remembrance, without some mixtures either of wrath or doubting. I confess it makes me many times tremble to think of the relation wherein the Lord hath placed me in his House, wherein you and others look on me, and expect much from me (as yours intimates) who am so unsutable to a door-keeper there, lest while much weight depends on such a worm, that Word be fully and justly verified,* Isa.22.25. *and so of being reared up a Monument for a living end, as was his Pillar,* 2 Sam.18.18. *I prove but an heap of Infamy,* vers.17. *But over against these faintings, when they have ran in as a flood, I have hitherto found the Spirit of the Lord lifting up a Standard, and displaying a Banner in his Fear, by which a seasonable rescue hath been offered in a time of need. And that by keeping me upon, and now and than succeeding me in some measure in this Three-fold work, which I doubt not but you have arrived to a good degree and great boldness in the Faith of;*

First,

First, *That I do not satisfie my self in any ordinary and slight Evidences of an Interest in eternal Love, but press toward that full Assurance of Faith founded in the New-Covenant, and universally influential on the New-Creature. I speak not as if I had attained much, but this is with me by the Grace of Christ, my soul is so much the more engaged to press after the riches of full assurance of understanding a fellowship in the mystery of God the Father, and of Christ, as I see the dayes are evil, the glimmerings whereof in that degree the Father sees good to intrust me withal, have been an unspeakable stay to me against the fears of what man can do unto me; and through your Prayers, and the help of the Spirit of Jesus, I hope will continue so to be unto the end; the powers whereof both to peace against the fears of this day* (Rom. 8. 31. to the end) *and to purging against the filth of it,* (2 Tim. 2. 19. 1 Joh. 3. 3.) *I need not insist to shew you, who your selves are taught it of God,* Job. 36. 22.—

2dly. *Another main work which I find of great necessity and advantage, is, the setting up in my soul the dominion of the Cross of Christ, in a daily mortification (through spiritual aid and arguments) of the affections and lusts of the Flesh, to every thing that may, or must suffer loss in the expected fiery tryal, whether it be either corruptible things, as Silver and Gold (any under-Christ enjoyments) or corrupted, corrupting things, as is all the filthiness both of the Flesh and of the Spirit. The entanglements of one or other of these is the snare which so easily besets most of those who in this day are contriving* how much Truth they may possibly sell, or at least expel for peace, *who seldome treat upon these terms, but Satan makes his market on them, we are not ignorant of his devices; To be therefore mor-*

fixed by time to these things, is a very great part of our best Interest, not only that (in this sense) our sins go aforehand to judgement, that we may not be judged in them, and for them with the World, when the Lord comes out of his place, to punish the inhabitants of the Earth, and ariseth terribly to shake it; but also that our pleasant pictures, costly coverings, and all our delectable things may be so crucified to us, and we to them in the love of them, that it may be no hard thing when the Lord calls for them to glorifie him, to say to them, Get ye hence, What profit is there in my Blood? if the Lord (his Name, Cause, Testimony) hath ruin of it, what is that between us and him?

3dly. I also am brought into an experimental observation how much of moment is the spirit of a sound mind, to have real, substantial, and digested principles, and to be in union with them concerning that Cause, for which we are at the point to be throughly tryed, Whether that part of it that concerneth Worship, or otherwise, to have our Faith in such a day as this to be only founded in the wisdom of man (our own or others) short of the power of God, to build another man's foundation, or boast in another man's line, of things made ready to our hand, at a time when every man's work must be tryed, and every man must bear his own burden, and give such an accompt as this is of himself to God; though the structure seem never so stately, and to be founded on the highest resolution, yet will that doom and out-cry sooner or latter attend it, as did his Ax, 2 Kings 6. And indeed (as you observe) backslidings at this time of day are very rarely and hardly repaired (though I trust some will) ere the door be shut, Mat. 25. 8, 9, 10. —— To have therefore our rejoycings in our selves, and not in another, Prov. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 4.

Gal. 6. 4. *is our great Interest; That it may be your sweet portion, is the prayer of him (who (being unexpectedly interrupted) having nothing of moment to impart as tydings,*

Rests,

Yours, as ever.

To a Friend, long kept close Prisoner, under hard Circumstances, and greater threatnings.

Everlasting joy upon your head, while sorrow and sighing flee away.

Beloved, and honoured by and for the Lord!

THis morning, having obtained that mercy from the Lord, of reading a Character of your heart drawn by your own hand, wherewithal I and others were not a little refreshed, and a safe hand presenting for the conveyance of this to you, which I hope may reach you, I thought my self providentially called and concerned to give you a testimony of my joy in the Grace of Christ, which is engaged hitherto to uphold you with everlasting arms, that neither the strength nor length of your Suffering is such to you, as is accompted otherwise by you than light, and but for a moment, being laid on the bal-

lance with the Glory that is ready to be revealed in us. In this way of reckoning, while our eye is kept on invisible and eternal weights of Glory, realizing and impropriating them, Crowns of thorns are more easie and less dishonourable than at a distance they seem to be, or than we sense and apprehend them, while we are reasoning after the flesh. —— Weights indeed they have and are, and such as make the oppressed many times to groan earnestly, none for the present being joyous but grievous, and are tenderly thought upon by him, who in all their afflictions is afflicted, the Angel of whose presence also is with them; but we know the End of the Lord, and his Rest shall be glorious, when his indignation ceaseth in their destruction; but he rests in his Love, and there also shall make the weary to rest. —— I judge my self some-way rebuked from above, and untaught what and how to pray as I ought, if in any prayer of mine I forget the Sons of your noble Order, and especially in seeking what you desire; namely, that you through the greatness of Faith may enter into rest, and at this time of day, while he hath taken business out of your hand, he may the more abundantly acquaint and refresh you with that dismission to rest, as may secure you until the indignation be over-past. You know his priviledge, who (*Jer.* 36. 5.) though he was shut up, that he could not walk abroad about his Lord's business, was nevertheless hid there by the Lord; when the Courtiers did purpose to take him, (*vers.*26.) But if in the Father's Counsel it appear best, that out of these Store-houses he bring more of his precious boxes of Oyntment to be poured out upon the present Funerals of the Cause he is concerned in, I make no question

ſtion but the ſavour thereof will commend it ſelf to all the Virgins in this and other generations, and they ſhall have Robes and Reſt, till they ſtand again in their lot at the end of dayes; and who believing and loving Jeſus Chriſt in Truth, would not put off his filthy garments, in expectation of ſuch change of raiment?

As for my part, my Father graciouſly indulgeth me, and the Lambs here, giving us an undeſerved Covert (of which no reaſon can be given) even where Satan's ſeat is, while other flocks are diſperſed and ſcattered. Neer about us, by my laſt I acquainted, that ſome from our neighbouring parts, are ſent to that place of ancient experience, where they have a ſtock of prayers and preſence to begin upon: they begin on ſtraw, as learning to endure hardneſs as good Souldiers; the Lord make that word good to them, which often hath been in that place ſweet to me, *Exod.* 23.25. and at length, *Eccleſ.* 4.14. I expect daily the ſame lot, in the Lord's with-holding his hand from which, I fear nothing more than a Spirit apt to do as *Agag*, 1 Sam.15.32. putting off the evil day, the leaſt Sun-ſhine brought forth a manifeſtation, that notwithſtanding the ruine of his Nation, and danger of himſelf, he was not mortified to the delicacy of his life; nor had eſcaped (though he thought he had waved) the bitterneſs of his death.

I need your Prayers and precious Exhortations, tending to prevent ſlumber, that I be not taken at unawares. The Lord keep freſh and manifeſt before your eyes and mine, the Captain of our Salvation, not only as a leading pattern, but as a life-giving Principle, on which having our minds ſtayed,

we may ſtill be truſting in him, as kept in peace upon peace there, with true reſpects to all your Family,

Reſts,

Yours, in the love of Jeſus.

26th 4th *month*, 62.

His judgement about continuing, or, forbearing Aſſemblies to Worſhip the Lord.

Strength and Beauty, as is in the Sanctuary.

Beloved in the Lord!

I *Thought it beſt, while it is yet day, and opportunity offers, that we attempt to make improvement ſo, as may mutually tend to the ſtrengthning each other's Faith and Love in Chriſt Jeſus, with ſuch intimations of occurrences as may direct to ſutable ſympathy and ſupplication, as the Intereſt of the Lord may require in its preſent circumſtances, at their hands, who have learned to approve themſelves as true* Sioniſts. *This place affords little, ſave the continued* ſeries *of divine goodneſs holding our ſouls in life, and not ſuffering our feet*

seat to be moved, where he withholds not the tokens of his Fatherly care and provision to supply all our wants both outwardly and within, to shew that he is good, our Rock, and no unrighteousness is with him.

We had rumours of being this week brought before the Deputy Lieutenant; but that came to nothing: Fear and fury fills many mens hands with work of their own occasioning; so doth he make their own tongues to fall upon themselves, the Righteous shall see it and flee away; and all men shall see and consider the work of God, for they shall wisely consider his doing.

They at our Island I hear are well and chearful, but free access to them is denyed, nothing else can be expected as times and jealousies are; yet Heaven is open still. David could form a song in the Cave when his Faith reached to this assurance, He shall send from Heaven and save me. Earth was block'd up, but Heaven was open still. And as long as Heaven holds, he had no ground to mistrust a want of the Promises accomplishment to the uttermost. Many thoughts of heart have exercised us as well in groans at the throne, as in other sad conferences among our selves at the reasonings and resolves of your strong men, who by drawing away the shoulder from the yoke, and their hand from the Plough, wherein they seemed so well skilled and blessed formerly, have given way to the ceasing of their work in a time when their Faith and Love to Christ is brought to its tryal; and that any poor souls should interpose with their lives in their hands, to bear up the Name of Christ, and to preserve a nail in his House; in their absence it serves to signifie, that there is something of reality in that Promise, The last shall be first, and the first last. And touching your Question, What ground a Church hath, in times of Persecution, to

appear publickly? *If by publickly be meant only so far knownly as wherein (with the best prudence and caution used as their case stands) they may most effectually answer the ends of mutual edification, and hold up the Glory of Christ in the practise of his Institutions; It's so far from being a Question,* What grounds they have to meet, *as we know not* what grounds *can well be held up to the contrary, by any who pretend to so much profession, as that any part of the Instituted Will of God is worth the suffering for, or that Christ is worth the following in Gospel-Precepts, when the Obedience of Saints therein is to be tryed as by fire. If you be pleased to single out any Reasons that can pretend to satisfie Conscience, guided by the mind of God in Scripture, they may have an examination.*

Rests,

Yours, many wayes oblieged.

20th 7th month, 62.

To

To the ſame Friend, and ſomething further on the ſame Subject.

My very Dear!

THe Sea-Monſters they draw forth their breſt, and give ſuck to their young ones, Ah! what ſhall the Lord's People who have received anointing to Preach the bleſſed Goſpel, become cruel as the Oſtriches of the Wilderneſs, that the young Children (yea, and old Diſciples too) ask Bread and none giveth it unto them; nay, are willing to ſeek their Bread with the peril of their lives, becauſe of the Sword of the Wilderneſs; And ſhall ſuch men as we who have known the Terrors of the Lord, and felt the Love of Chriſt conſtraining us, that pretend to know the worth of an immortal ſoul, the joy for one ſinner that repenteth, that have had a diſpenſation of the Goſpel committed to us, and yet no neceſſity lying upon ſuch, no wo to ſuch if they Preach not the Goſpel, no compaſſion at leaſt, no more compaſſion to the multitudes that are ſcattered as ſheep that have no ſhepherd: Alas! where is the fellowſhip of that Spirit which of old enabled the publiſhers of this Goſpel, after they were ſhamefully intreated, to wax bold in their God, to Preach the Goſpel of their God with much contention, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 2. approving them-

themselves the Ministers of Christ in Imprisonments, in Tumults, in Stripes, in Necessities, in Distresses. Where is the Lord God of *Eliah!* Where is he that put his Spirit upon them who first trusted in Christ? I have been often refreshed with a saying of holy *Burroughs*, in his Epistle to the Reader of his *Heart-Divisions*; alledging a saying of *Luthers*, "I desire "to be a faithful Minister of Christ and his Church, "if I cannot be a *Prudent* one, the standing in the "gap is more dangerous and troublesom than getting "behind the hedge, there you may be more secure, "and under the wind; but it's best to be there where "God looks for a man, &c. thus he. —— Indeed in this day, if ever the Lord looks who they be that will stand in the gap, that will answer that Character, *My life is continually in my hand, yet do I not forget thy Precepts:* They who rescued the Field of Lentiles, and the Field of Barley (which were part of the Lord's Land, how inconsiderable soever it might seem in its self) when the generalty of *Israel* deserted them, were at last reckoned among the first rank of *David's* Worthies, 2 *Sam.* 23. 11. 1 *Chron.* 11. 13. though perhaps while it was in doing they might be reckoned rash, heady, hair-brain'd men; they who cannot pass as well through evil as through good report in the Gospel of God, can surely go but a little way in it; he that left at *Pamphilia*, and would go no further in the work (because perhaps 'twas too hot and heavy) was not thought by *Paul* fit for the same imployment another time, whatever his Kinsman *Barnabas* might think of him. I could wish some of these things might be by the Lord let in, and set home upon the spirits of such, who not only Retire themselves, but found a Retreat also to others,

others, who might otherwise be sweetly and advantagiously engaged to fight this good fight of Faith; War this good Warfare, endure this hardness as good Souldiers of Jesus Christ. I am called off from pursuing this matter. All here are well; not else at present,

Rests,

Yours, many wayes.

18th 8th *month*, 62.

To a Friend released out of Prison.

Wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart like the Sand of the Sea.

Precious and Beloved!

I *Have my longings to know how it fareth with your Soul, now you are under the advantage of gathering up at liberty the diffused Light and Anointing that is dropt with such variety in the Body of Christ, especially in your City, whither, I observe it is the aim of most of the choice Persons up and down, who either are driven, or disengaged from necessary attendance in their Countrey stations, to make haste, promising themselves greater liberty and enjoyment there, than ordinarily here can be expected. In respect whereof I have been sometimes conceiting that it is a*

place,

place, and puts into a capacity for Believers to make the most rare Extracts, and pick out the choicest Notions and Assistances of any where in the World; which thoughts are easily attended with such temptations, Oh! that I had the wings of a Dove, I would flee far away from this stormy wind and tempest, I would see that goodly Mountain and Libanon. *But then I am as often checked with this reproof,* He that encreaseth knowledge, encreaseth sorrow; *these creaturely engagements may render a man the more prudent and rational; it's many to one if they make him more serious, spiritual, evangelical. It may be easie to get the mind fraughted with noise, news, notions; but to get the heart established with grace, drawn into a more substantial and experimental communion with Jesus Christ, according to the tenor of the New-Covenant, and in the Grace and Truth thereof; this is not so easie to be found and maintained, without extraordinary watch and diligence. These words of Wisdom, may be more heard in quiet, and to better purpose and improvement, than in the out-cry of him that ruleth among Fools. Soul-searching, Heart-preparing, Sin-mortifying work, may have more advantage from the retirement of a nasty Prison, then (unless abundance of Grace be ministred) from being left to walk in a large place, especially if with a large principle of Liberty to touch withal, but being laid in Gospel-bonds under the Instituted charge of none. In these respects (my much valued in the Lord!) I have not only had some tryals of my own soul, while I have been representing things to my self in such a figure; and also seen the woful issues thereof on some others who have fallen under my short-sighted observation; but have withal had many a thought of you, since you have been*

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(in an outward respect) as a Hinde let loose; I will not say I have had hints of any tamperings with you, but only, that it is marvellous if you have not, which doth and will so much the more magnifie Grace in your being preserved in Christ Jesus, stedfast in the Faith, fervent in the Spirit, lively and active in the wayes of God, growing up more into Christ which is our Head, and being more publickly diffused by a largeness of Spirit in all the members. This, all this I hope, pray, and shall to my utmost endeavour, may be found remaining and encreasing in you, according to the form of sound words, the pattern of them who first trusted in Christ, worthy of all the Grace you have received, and Testimony you have born hitherto in doing and suffering, and worthy of the blessed hope, of the Resurrection of the Lord's Cause, and the approaching of his promised Glory. In a fellowship in this earnest expectation and endeavour, you have the prayers of all our little Family, but especially and particularly of,

26th 6th month, 63.

Your wonted,

and constant Soul-Friend.

Unto

Unto an ancient Acquaintance taken at a Meeting, and cast into Prison.

Entrance and abiding with joy, and rejoycing into the King's Palace.

My never dearer than now Friend!

I *Salute you in this new state, into which you are cast by the wise hand of my good Father, in fellowship with my self and other dear Companions, and as you have obtained this Grace, that you suffer not an evil-doer, (though as an evil-doer) unto bonds, that the Word of God may not be bound, nor Gospel-gatherings unto Christ, confined within, and accommodated to state models, answerable to the lusts of wicked men. So; I pray you may not miss of those full free uninterrupted streams of Strength, Satisfaction, and Consolation, which have been the promised and experienced portion of the highest Saints that have appeared for God. My soul hath had fellowship in that thanksgiving touching you,* Dan. 3. 28. *Blessed be that God who hath sent his Angel, and hath kept his Servants that hath trusted in him, that they have* changed the King's word, *and* yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any God except their own God. *And I pray that you may never*

never want the experiment of those constant supports and sweetnings that I know a poor worm hath enjoyed in this condition; yet it's not your bonds I desire, but your blessedness exalted over the heads of them; especially I desire on your behalf, that your soul may be furnished with that satisfactory clearness in the Cause, and jealousie of the terms of Deliverence that invite you forth; that in patience you may possess your soul, with constancy enjoy the sweetness of it, from its fitness for converse with God, and with courage and resolution refel those Hen-pickings which I presume is your portion by some prudent Cowards, wherewith your City aboundeth, and your large acquaintance hath made you known unto. I trust the great things, of the Name, Interest, Glory, and Gospel-truths of Jesus Christ, owned by your act, and sealed to in their excellency by your bonds, will out-weigh the self-saving arguments of air, health, trade, liberty, which are things (and greater things than these) that must be hated upon this competition. That prudent Proposal of, Master, save thy self; had more of the Devil in it than (I think) Peter was aware, when it was brought in to retard Christ's opportunity of glorifying his Father, and saving his People in a way of suffering. You well know the excellent proof of the Faith of those Travellers of old, was, they conquered the opportunity they had of returning to their Comforts and Relations, their Kindred and Countrey from whence they came. Truly, there is before you, and in your hand an opportunity of glorifying God in a way of suffering, and it puts me in mind of a passage of a good man, treating of the sale of opportunity, thus expresseth himself to the case in hand; "A man may have an opportunity to suffer "for Christ, which if he neglect, he may never have

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" the like again: To suffer for Christ is honourable;
" God will not put this honour upon every one, he puts
" this honour upon his Vessels of honour, he gives
" Grace to a man, and casts him into a vessel of Silver
" or Gold, and then throws them into the fire to melt,
" & suffer for his Name. The Mettal of that Christi-
" an must be Silver or Gold that can suffer for Christ:
" a vessel of Wood, throw it into the fire, its Hoops
" will fly off, it will break asunder and never hold out.
" The three Children that were cast into the fiery fur-
" nace, what glorious mould and metal were they made
" of? Had they not taken that opportunity to suffer for
" God, they might never meet with such a one again.
" (1) What a spreading Fame and Glory of God did
" their sufferings scatter over all the World, Dan. 3.
" 28, 29. God's Glory shines out of their sufferings;
" enemies acknowledge none like Israel's God. (2) They
" honour themselves; 1. They no sooner in the fire,
" but they meet with Jesus there, verf. 24, 25. accor-
" ding to Isa. 43. 2. 2. It was an honour to them
" that God should work such a noble miracle for them,
" as to stop the mouth of the fire, that it could not burn
" them. (3) Their Suffering was the Churches ho-
" nour and advantage; it won great respect and ho-
" nour to the Jewish Church and Religion. (4) Did
" not their Suffering, and God's owning them, streng-
" then the weak Faith of their distressed Brethren,
" the poor Jewes? —— Your Sufferings may be the
" Conversion of others: How willing would you be to
" Preach a Sermon, if you were sure it would be the
" Conversion of some soul? thy Suffering for Christ
" may be the best Sermon that ever thou preachedst in
" thy life, and may win more upon souls; as we say, The
" best Living, is the best Preaching; so I say, To

" suffer

"*ſuffer well is the beſt preaching, &c.* (5) *It will* "*encreaſe your future glory,* 2 Cor. 4. 17.

I had other things on my thoughts, but am interrupted by the unavoidable acceſs of ſtrangers, and noiſe; I may next ſay a little more, I am troubled to break off thus, but you know the heart, the opportunity, the interruption of a Priſoner, eſpecially where there there is a full and rude Priſon. The Lord help you, that by a patient continuing in well-doing, you may commit your ſoul, body, eſtate, liberty, into the hands of God, as of a faithful Creator, knowing whom you have believed, and that he is able to keep that which you have committed to him againſt that day; only the good thing (that bleſſed Teſtimony to Truth as it is in Jeſus) committed by him unto you, keep through the holy Spirit that dwelleth in you. Sell not for a ſuppoſed opportunity (to buy and ſell and get gain) your real opportunity to exalt Jeſus Chriſt in ſuffering for his Names ſake; moſt who make haſte this way out of bonds, do uſually reckon, they will be more prudent next, than to ſuffer for a circumſtance; and commonly God ſhews himſelf more jealous of his Glory, than to imploy them again in ſo honourable a work. Unleſs, as one of the Martyrs in Queen Maries *time, who recanted his Profeſſion, becauſe (ſaid he) I cannot burn for Chriſt: but ſhortly after his Houſe was burnt (as I remember) and he muſt burn without Chriſt. The Lord ſtrengthen you with might in your ſoul.* Amen.

30th of the 5th mon. 64.

Yours, &c.

Upon a Letter ſent to him for Conveyance, from a Church of Chriſt in *London*, to one of their Fellowſhip, in Priſon, near him.

That you may ſtand perfect and compleat in all the Will of God, deſired.

My inward Friend!

THe receipt of yours to me, expoſing to my view for advantage, as well as committing to my hand for Conveyance, that lively inſtance of the care of a whole Congregation towards one of their Members, was not more welcome to me, than the matter offered therein to obſervation was rebuking and convincing of my ſinful ſhortneſs towards divers, unto whom I ſtand deeply engaged, as well as dearly related, in Goſpel-bonds. I hope it hath had, and will farther be ſucceeded with this iſſue, to awaken me to a farther obſervation and apprehenſion of that great debt that I owe on Chriſt's behalf to divers ſouls, whoſe faces for a long time I have not ſeen in the fleſh, from which my diſtance, in reſpect of place, doth not diſcharge me in point of duty, and be of directive uſefulneſs to guide my way, and inform how I ought to behave my ſelf among the ſcattered members of the Church of the Living God, which is (where it is as

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it ſhould be) the Pillar and Ground of Truth; on which, as on a Pillar, that ſhould go out no more, ſhould ſtand engraven, to be ſeen and read of all men, the publick Edicts of our King, with all his Statutes and Judgments, eſpecially in a time when they are ſpoken againſt, and would be razed out; nay, razed to the very foundation thereof, by the ſons of *Edom*, that border of wickedneſs, the people againſt whom God hath indignation for ever. The conſideration whereof doth not only require that they be living ſtones, who are competent for ſuch ends, having living tables in their hearts, for the inſcriptions of the Spirit of the Living God, and that the beauty of this Ornament be ſet in Majeſty, but doth frequently commend to me that obſervation which your laſt ere this (ſome time ſince) was hinting to me of the need we have, who deſign ſuch ſervices, to wait for power by the Spirit from on high, to be his Witneſſes, and to expect according to his Promiſe, That ſhowers of the latter rain ſhall come down to furniſh a people to bear his glory in the adminiſtrations of his Houſe, anſwering the Inſtitutions of the New Teſtament; although I am no way taken with that dilatory inference, wherein ſome ſeem to ſtick, as if upon the obſervation that Bryars and Thorns are come upon God's Houſes in the joyous City, and are likely to abide there till the Spirit be poured out from on high; therefore it were beſt, and our Intereſt, till the manifeſt taking place of that promiſed diſpenſation, not to put our hands to ſuch Acts and Ordinances, the beautious Majeſty of which muſt needs be acknowledged to be very much wrapt up and concerned in the hoped iſſues of ſuch a Glory ſtepping in. There being bleſſed ends to be by us

promoted in our preſent ſtate, by our dutiful obedience to every Inſtitution of our King; and through infinite Grace and Mercy, are there ſuch Gifts and Graces of the Spirit to be found on ſome, as may yield help to ſober, humble enquirers, to get over ſuch ſtumbling-blocks, and contribute toward their preparing in Body and Spirit, as an adorned Bride to meet the Bridegroom, who loves to find his keeping all his Commandements unrebukable, and without ſpot to his appearing. In which attire, I earneſtly deſire your whole man, Body, and Soul, and Spirit, may be found miniſtring a practical convincing Argument, by your ſtanding compleatly perfect in the whole Will of God, that there is (as there indeed is) a hidden excellency in fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt in thoſe wayes and appointments of his upon their ſouls, who in Faith and Faithfulneſs are yielded up to him therein, which hath admirable Vertue in it, though at preſent not attended with thoſe mighty Signs and Wonders by Gifts of the Holy Spirit, the which were rather for the ſakes of them who believed not, than for ſuch as through Faith are directed to judge of, and cloſe with ſuch things anſwerable to their tendency by good pleaſure to lead into the Myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt. The Reaſon and Efficacy whereof lies not in any juſt proportion betwixt the thing commanded and the Myſtery propoſed to enjoyment, no more than there did between waſhing in *Jordan*, and *Naamans* cleanſing, (the cauſe of the ſcornful ſtorming of his proud ſpirit) but in the meer ſoveraignty of divine good pleaſure, who gives us a word of Faith to guide and prove our obedience, and engage our humble expectation of his own preſence, who is Lord of Influences, to conduct the

the Heirs of Promiſe into thoſe ſecrets of his Pavilion by doors, at the threſhold of which the Children of this Worlds wiſdom ſtumble, either by ſenſual Formality, ſticking in the letter of things; or by aiery Speculations, rejecting the weakneſs and fooliſhneſs of Chriſt in his Inſtitutions; but Wiſdom is juſtified of her Children. All here are well, love, honour and ſalute you.

Yours,

in Soul-ſervice.

To a Friend, who, after ſome Retirement, was returning to purſue his Calling in Affairs of this World.

The Lord be your ſhade, on your Right-Hand.

My very dear Brother!

I *Perceive you are applying your ſelf to ſomething men call,* Buſineſs in the World; *and I have comfortable hopes, that you have ſtudied ere this hour that leſſon,* Finally Brethren, the time is ſhort, it remaineth, &c. — For the faſhion of this World paſſeth away. *Oh my dear Brother! my ſoul is afflicted to obſerve the over-greedy Engagement of many (whom I love and honour for their former eminency) plunging themſelves into buſineſs, and there even drowning themſelves in ruine and perdition; loſing the ſavour of*

their spirits, the intimacy of their Communion with Christ in the Spirit, and so grow dry, careleß, prudent, fearful, omiſſive, what not? till there is hardly left so much as the uniform appearance of a soul, that hath been the seat of such glorious discoveries and enjoyments as men have readily spoke of formerly. It may well be asked of many now, as the Apostle, Where is the Bleſſedneſs ye spoke of? —— *Men discourse of their primitive applications of Truth, and to it speak much and frequently of bleſſedneß in the things of the Goſpel; it was bleſſed Praying, and bleſſed Hearing, and bleſſed Meeting, and bleſſed Meditating; because in all these they sought after, and partook of bleſſedneß! But where is that now? There is somewhat of Praying, and Preaching, &c. but where is the bleſſedneß of all these? Is it not very much departed, and what may be the cauſe? is it not much from hence? Men are gone deep into the spirit of the World, and are grown carnal, of the Earth earthy, and savouring of the Earth, and thereby loſing their Love, Zeal, Faithfulneſs, Inſenſibly, but very dangerouſly. I hope better things of you, and that you both do and will watch your own Spirit, and stir up others to take great heed to their spirits, that they deal not treacherouſly.*

Yours,

7th 3d month, 64.

To

To an ancient Friend, giving his Apprehenſions concerning the multitude of Profeſſors; with ſome of his Experiences both in Bonds and Sickneſs.

Kind and very much reſpected!

THe poſture of the Lord's own People, even of ſuch, who in dayes paſt, with greateſt intimacy, and endearment, went to the Houſe of God in company, hath of late years under theſe ſtupendous diſpenſations preſented it ſelf to me much after the ſimilitude of a great Fleet of Ships outward-bound, who ſet out of their Port beautifully equipped, laden, trimmed, in conſortſhip, and under a very proſperous promiſing gale, all ſpreading their very Top-gallant, ſayls to ſhew their celerity and make the beſt of their way: A very beautiful and pleaſant proſpect to an eye delighted in ſuch expeditions. But having ſtood but a little way in this courſe out of ſight of the Countrey from whence they ſet forth, a dark night and diſmal ſtorm overtaking them, they are diſperſed all Sea-over; a great number being mindful of the Port whence they came, think they have a fair opportunity, and plauſible excuſe to return again, and draw up with deſign to adventure ſuch ſtorms no more. Others, and they not a few, being confident and conceited of their own under-

ſtanding, do ſhape their courſe to and fro as the wind ſhifteth, are caſt upon Rocks and Shoals, to the making ſhipwrack of Faith and a good Conſcience. Many others fearing that courſe, think yet by caſting their Wheat and Tackling into the Sea, they ſhall ſomewhat lighten their Ship, and be the better able to weather it out, and ſo dropping Anchors at the wrong end, wiſh for day. Few, very few preferring the Intereſt of the great Owner and Fraughter beyond their own Lives, determine to ſtem the ſtorm, and preſs toward the Port unto which they are bound, in the face of all difficulties; and of theſe few, Alas, How rare is it, that two keep in company with intents to ſtrengthen and help each other as they can! I need not make the Application particularly to ſpiritual things, the day we live in gives ſad evidence of the Truth of all theſe Inſtances; and now the caſe being thus, how deſireable ſhould it be to ſuch, who in diſpoſition, deſire, and endeavour, are preſſing forward to meet with good Neighbours, who may keep company, and yield (if need be) advice, ſupply, or aſſiſtance, till we all come to drop Anchor within the Vale, whither the Forerunner is for us entered. If in this providential coming-up with one another, it might be of any encouragement or advantage to you, I could at large acquaint you, That *by the Grace of God, I am what I am*; who have great occaſion to exalt wonderful loving kindneſs, that hath helped hitherto ſo, as after five year imprisonment, in more than five Priſons; and in this laſt year above nine months ſickneſs, with divers tryals of Faith and Patience, I have never yet ſeen the leaſt reaſon (& I praiſe Chriſt my Lord) never been under an hours temptation, to relinquiſh,

or

or repent of my Testimony in Word or Deed to any one persecuted Truth of Christ, for which I suffer; and though my present lot be in a place where the salt sharp Air is manifestly ruinous to my health, exposing me (more than ever I was in my life) to daily distempers, and under a Sentence of Primunire, and in a readiness on all occasions, for threatned Transportation, besides other threatning and straitning circumstances; yet under all, is Christ as precious to my soul as ever, and so is his Cause, Work, and Institutions, and faithful Children, and every way as worthy of my All, as I professed him to be in the greatest fulness or plenty of all things; neither durst I for my life balk the least Truth of Jesus, which is to be witnessed unto, for the obtaining any health, liberty, or other accommodations whatever; nor can I express the constant satisfaction, and sometimes consolation that my soul is made to enjoy in following God, especially when in my greatest sickness, about this time twelve month, and at other seasons, when I have been ready to step into Eternity; Thoughts and Pen cannot set forth the Peace passing understanding, wherewith my soul was possessed, in respect of the present Truths of Jesus Christ, and his heart love to me therein, which do to this day abide in their excellency, and obligation, engaging my soul to love and praise the Lord for his unspeakable gifts of Grace to me herein, who have as fearful, cowardly, unbelieving, slothful, self-saving, a poor heart, as I think any poor Christian alive is pestred withal. In the mention therefore of this, or any part of it, I would not be understood to intend the proposing my self to any high Thoughts that should be had of me, as if I were better than others, or had attained

attained to any praiſe-worthy, or exemplary degree of ſtedfaſtneſt herein; for I have much more to ſay in way of ſelf-judging, humbling, and loathing before the Lord; but my deſign in this liberty of ſpeech, is to engage you to a like freedom, and to give you in part a Character how you may repreſent me to your ſelf in your addreſſes before the Lord; but principally, that hereupon I may take occaſion as from experience, the more confidently and earneſtly to beg you, That you would be much in the ſearching and trying your heart and wayes, examining to the bottom (if that work have layen neglected, as in too many it doth) how it ſtands between the Lord and you in point of union, and relation toward each other. The diſpenſations that are over us, are come to lay the Ax to the root of every Tree; if the root be found to be rottenneſs, the bloſſoms (of an external Profeſſion) will go up like the duſt. Nothing ſhort of true Intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, laid in real Regeneration, and the renewing of the holy Spirit, will hold out to the end of this tryal to any purpoſe; forms of Godlineſs will expoſe to man's wrath, and where there wants the Power of it, it will expoſe to Gods wrath, whoſe fire is in *Sion*, and his furnace in *Jeruſalem*. Nor will it ſuffice that Intereſt in it ſelf, in Chriſt, be ſafe, barely conſidered, unleſs alſo Influences from him be obtained, and Communion with him be improved, unto a daily reſignation to him, and walking in the beauties of Holineſs before him. Any ſinful ſhortneſs, neglect, abatements, loſſes, of this kind are very perilous in ſuch a time as this, it's one to a thouſand, that is under decayes of this kind, and proceeds in a path of it without early ſenſe and repentance; but that word is verified,

Men

Men gather them, they easily sink down into an earthly, carnal, sowre, discontented, fearful, heartless posture of spirit, and then are unable to make resistance to any temptation, whether to sin, or sinking. They therefore have of all others the advantage, who by the constraints of Faith, and Love, abide close, serious, spiritual, faithful, conscientious with, and towards the Lord, not slothful in business, fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord, rejoycing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in Prayer. That you may be found in this attire, waiting for the coming of our King, is the sincere desire for you of him, who would be glad to hear from you, and to serve your soul in any thing within the compass of,

Yours, in true respects,

A. C.

To

To a Friend, adviſing to look well to his ſteps, in ſome quick turns of Providence.

An Hiding-place in the Cleft of the Rock, till the Indignation be over-paſt.---Deſired for you.

Honoured and Beloved!

WHat a bleſſing, *beyond compare, is it to be as thoſe living things, mentioned*, Rev. 4. 8. *Full of* Eyes within, and before, and behind, (*v.6.*) *Indeed ſo ſhort are the turns that the Lord takes, ſo myſterious are his works, his way in the clouds, and paths in the deep waters, that we muſt needs ſay as he*, Job 26. 14. Lo theſe are part of his wayes, but how little a Portion is heard of him? the Thunder of his Power who can underſtand? *When I either look back and ſee what hath the Lord wrought! Or forward, and think what great things ſeem to hover over us in Promiſes. The former things are come to paſs, and new things he doth declare; truly, I have many tremblings in my ſelf, Alas! Who ſhall live when God doth this? On what a ſingle foot have I need ſtand, both in point of Hope and Holineſs, that I may preſerve a ſtation undefiled, and not be aſhamed before him, at his coming. I was never more fearing my ſelf,*

ſelf, and others, than in this half-work, that ſeems to be in a capacity of being done before us: the bottom is ſuch, as neither Saints nor Sinners methinks durſt adventure much upon; yet many go on in the ſimplicity of their hearts, to try if perhaps they may do the leaſt ſervice to help the deſired work forward to its juſt iſſues. I am apt to think you ſee enough of Lamentation in the diviſions of Reuben, *that make ſuch ſearchings of heart; the ſame Cloud (as I was ſaying laſt) extends hither, and the Effects are the ſame I ſuppoſe here and there. They that have gone hand in hand in their mourning hitherto, ſeem neceſſitated to part, and yet neither ſing nor weep mutually at parting, but a ſpirit ſeems to ſunder them that is not likely to carry them far without miſcarriage. But it's no wonder to ſee a ſinful Nation, a People laden with iniquity, fuller of paſſions than of compaſſions, divided and loſe one another in a ſeaſon, when it ſeems neither day nor night; and about a work, that is ſo fitted to ſet out the manifold wiſdom of God, as if the Maker of Heaven and Earth had reſerved his work, his ſtrange work; his act, his ſtrange act, till laſt; and left this inſcription on every footſtep he takes, Yet he will ſhew him greater works than theſe, that ye may marvel,* Joh. 5. 20. *They of all, have the crowning mercy, who are thought worthy to have that Righteous man's portion, to be called to the foot of God,* Iſa. 41. 2. Deut. 33. 3. *A very holy Evangelical large Spirit, is only fitted to comply with what our God is doing. Bleſſed are all they that wait on him.* ——

Theſe Parts afford no Intelligence, only Evil-men and Seducers wax worſe and worſe; mens hearts are failing for fear, and for looking for the things that are coming on upon the Earth, while the Powers of Heaven,

ven, and the Pillars of the Earth are shaking. I find few seriously enquiring in any other than a superficial Spirit. What must the Righteous do? Our very Character seems to be, a People void of counsel. I am,

Yours, in spiritual affection knit to you, waiting to obtain relation to you in all the will of our King.

A. C.

To a Friend, with Arguments for Patient waiting.

The Lord be your shade upon your Right Hand.

My Dear!

I Have sometimes had Instruction, and conceived engagement from that word, 2 *Kings* 3. 16, 17 to dig pits till the rain fill the pools; *Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain, yet the valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, &c.* The latter dayes work hath Promises prepared, and proportioned to a design of magnifying the Naked Arm of God, in the spoyling the Glory, sealing up the hand and hiding pride of every man. And this advantage have we beyond our Predecessors, that the Lord hath made eminent, evident advances upon this Work

our view and remembrance; having given us, as in a little Map, a lively description and testimony of what he both can and will do for his Names sake, and he having been at work in a way of Wonders, nay, proceeding to do very terrible things; still he expecteth we should be following him, in a Faith and expectation of *great things*, Joel 2. 21. That was a very good advice, *Job* 5. 8, *&c. I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause; which doth great things, and unsearchable, marvellous things without number, who giveth rain upon the Earth, and sendeth waters upon the Fields, to set up on high those that be low, that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.* —— (vers. 16.) *So that the poor hath Hope, and Iniquity stoppeth her mouth.* This is a day wherein the Lord's great Contests, seem to be drawing towards a determination and period, all Interests and Preparations seem haſtning their march toward the Valley of Decision. Thither bring down thy Mighty ones, O God! Ah! how should we be wakening up our selves, and others, to look about us, that we be not found naked, unclothed, unwarned, unarmed, and the day over-take us, as it may and will do others, at unawares! How may we see in every quarter, Idolatrous and Prophane persons, strengthning and stretching one another to the utmost extent of Abomination; and should not this yield an enforcing Argument to quicken us up for Christ, to look and lay about us, to engage as many as is possible to be on the Lord's side, lively, valiant, vigilant, with the Arm and Armour of God on the right hand and on the left; as those who are in an expectation of following the Lamb on the Mount Sion, under those Virgin qualifications, as bespeaks

them

them Called, Chosen, and Faithful: And that to this end, we admit not impressions to be made on our Spirits to the abatements either of our Light or Life in following on to know the Lord, from either our fear at the swellings of *Jordan* without, or offence, vexation, or inordinate grief and dispondency at the discords and inconsistencies of the Saints within: I must confess this Prison hath produced a fresh tryal of Spirit to me, of late, beyond what hitherto I have ordinarily observed, and experienced it, to see the abounding encreasing filthiness of this prophane Family, the Governors and Governed in it, being set upon the impudence of Abomination, not only slighting and hating Reproof, but daring us and Heaven with their Oaths, Curses, Singing, Roaring, Rageing, &c. insomuch as were not the goodness of God, and of his Cause, a relieving support, the place would become a Prison indeed; but this I take to be but as a little Scheme of a great World of Wickedness: How great is that Grace, that gives ground to say, *We know we are of God*, while the poor World lies thus in wickedness! Ah poor *England!* Oh that my head were waters! —

Yours, &c.

To a Friend, encouraging to ſted-faſtneſs.

Light ariſing out of obſcurity and darkneſs.

My honoured Friend!

THe principal intendment of this, is to let you know, that through Grace I am preſerved alive, in the midſt of many cooling and killing diſpenſations of Providence, yet hath not the length nor ſtrength of the preſſures been hitherto admitted to draw my Soul into any diſlike of the hand that layes them on, or of the Cauſe for which (at mens hand) I endure this hard uſage; but the more I am led either to behold the true principles of this Cauſe, or the gracious engagements and endearments of the heart of Chriſt in and to it, and to thoſe who in a ſpirit of Faith and faithfulneſs adhere to it, and are the Confeſſors of it, or to call over the gracious experiences that my ſelf and fellow-ſufferers in other places have had and teſtified, the dearer hath it, and every part and point of it been, made unto me, and the more confidently am I ſatisfied, that the Lord will appear to the ſhame of thoſe, Prophane, or Profeſſors, who are either the open enemies, or ſecret betrayers of it, and weakners of the Friends and Favourites thereof: And truly, I wiſh your ſoul may ſtand at due diſtance from any defilements and mixtures of this kind, which are apt to ſteal in inſenſibly upon ſpirits, influenced either with the Fear or Love of

Creatures, in this staggering and back-sliding hour of temptation, wherein men's politick and prudential contrivances to preserve themselves from danger, hath abundantly weakned and wasted the Courage, if not the Conscience of Testifying *Duty. It's of no small advantage (I find by blessed experience) to be giving daily diligence, in observation, how nearly and firmly the great Concerns of the Lord's Glory in his Works and Wayes, are related to the Lord Jesus, in his raised and exalted capacity, and how directly the weight of them all, rests upon his shoulders who is mighty to bear; and with what infinite wisdom, and according to what an exact platform of eternal counsel, all these seeming Meanders and Laborynths of exteriour transactions, are managed, according to the integrity of his heart, and the skilfulness of his hand, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. In the Faith and Hope of this, the Soul of a Beleever hath gracious invitations and engagement to return to its rest, knowing that in quietness and confidence is its strength, and are as the secrets of a Presence-Chamber for it, till these calamities be over-past; and though it look on, but cannot interpret signs in Heaven, and on the Earth perplexity, distress of Nations, the Sea and Waves roaring, through approaching woe to the Inhabiters of the Earth and of the Sea; yet it can acquiesce in the infallible knowledge of that Interpreter, one among a thousand, who is concerned in all these things engaged by Covenant, and resolved in* absolute Will, *to bring about, in the best time and way, the Ends of his Glory, and its blessedness, in a most sweet harmony and connection.*

This

This saying to the righteous, It shall go well with them; *and commanding their fluctuating tempestuous souls into a calm, is yet very far from inducing them to that carnal security and idleness, wherein tyred Professors are apt to wrap and bless themselves, concluding, we must leave publick things to Providence, and retire into a closset-converse with our selves and the Lord, things good in themselves, but usually abused into the generating of a private, selvish, narrow frame of Spirit, unfit to serve God in our generation, by Converting Sinners, Edifying Saints, or saving themselves from an untoward and adulterous generation, by a faithful testimony. That the contrary hereunto may be your blessed lot, namely, largness of Heart like the Sand on the Sea-shore, accompanied with cleanness of hand, and a Spirit clensed by the Blood, and set free by the Spirit of the Gospel, is the earnest desire for you, of him, who is*

Yours, assuredly.

These Parts yield little, only fresh gazing on a new Blazing-Star in the East; and divers talks of the beautiful Star in the West; few think of the Star of Jacob, *that bright Morning-Star: they who overcome shall have him as a certain fore-runner and prognostick of a Morning without Clouds; they must be up early, who look to be visited with the comfortable beams of it.* Even so, Amen.

1st. of the 2d. *month*, 65.

Another to the like effect.

Supplies of every good thing from the Shepherd and Stone of Israel.

Dear Heart!

IT is in my desire for you, that you may obtain the favour of a marked Mourner, securing you from approaching Plagues, and reserving you for expected Salvation among the Palm-bearing throng, who only are competent to learn the new song, as one of the One hundred forty four thousand, that are redeemed from the Earth. And though you are fed with the Bread of Affliction, and Waters of Adversity (and that also by measure and stealth) yet you may not want the satisfactory sight and hearing of a Teacher, that may guide you into all Truth, as it is in Jesus, keeping you upright in this staggering day, when so many reel to the right hand, and to the left. I confess, sometimes I have hopeful expectations of seeing some such effect as this of all these chidings, some of them of understanding shall fall to try them, and to purge and make them white, even to the time of the end; but yet, *It is a fearful thing thus to fall into the hands of the Living God.* My Eye that promotes his Glory, makes me no whit less a sinner; or my doing evil, that good may come thereby. I think I was hinting to you last time, the Caution the Lord hath ministred to me, by *Prov.* 25. 26. *A righteous man falling*

falling down before the wicked, is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt ſpring, detrimental and infectious to all that have any thing to do with him. The accompt that you give of the Wall of the Daughter of *Sion*, much-like his, *Neh.* 2. 13. which was once ſuch an inviting proſpect, *Pſal.* 48. 12, 13. would engage to that Out-cry, *Lam.* 2. 18, 19. but that there is hope in her end, That her Children ſhall return, though now they are not; her dead men ſhall live together, this dead body ſhall ariſe. A review therefore of her from the munition of Rocks, ſutable to that Landſchip, *Iſa.* 33. 20, *&c.* is becoming the Children of the King; but eſpecially hath it been of uſe to me, to feed upon that diſcovery, made of the temper of his heart, who is principally intereſted and concerned in all theſe mutations, *He ſhall not fail, nor be diſcouraged, till he have ſet Judgment in the Earth,* Iſa. 42. 4. The youths ſhall faint and grow weary, and young-men utterly fail; they who ſtand upon their youthful vigour and greenneſs, may and ſhall give way; but he who hath ſuch engagements with him, and for him, as *verſ.* 5, 6. he waits without wearineſs, and expects without impatience, till his enemies be made his footſtool. A fellowſhip through faith in in his Spirit, will furniſh to a ſimilitude in his patience, to a being armed with the ſame mind that was in him.

Reſts,

Yours, dearly.

To a Friend upon the death of a Zealous, Faithful, and therefore Persecuted Servant of the Lord.

Where is the Lord God of Elijah?

My true Friend!

IT comes to my lot, to take you now by the hand, though you may justly and earnestly challenge and expect it from a righter and more instructed heart and hand, who being under deep pressures, and considering there is a time to be silent (especially when put to shame) as well as a time to speak; is not easily drawn forth to any thing of this nature, till he can recover a little strength, waited for, to comfort others with the same comforts wherewith himself hath been (when he hath been) comforted himself of the Lord; dreading especially under such a dispensation to utter any thing rashly; knows that to speak his troubles, will add little to the allaying of yours; and that, as Vinegar upon Nitre, will be the singing songs to an heavy heart, his own or others; wisheth therefore his present silence may have no worse interpretation, than the seven dayes silence of Job's Friends, who answered him not a word when they saw his anguish was exceeding great, and their own was not very small. The Interest of words (meerly such)

such) can be of little signification, while the things themselves spoken of, are manifestly absent. Perhaps we have spoken enough, if not too much for our part, now God is come to speak his part, which requires much quiet attention, the rather for that though it be very loud, yet very mysterious, and deep, as are many of the Oracles of God; those especially wherein he designs to manifest himself to his, and not to the World. I could for my own part also lay hold on the like exemption, and silent retirement, as most befitting my present state and frame, altogether entangled and perplexed, and presuming that you have at hand to help not only the presence of the great promised Comforter, who can supply all your wants, but also the secondary supplement of many worthy Ones, who have received the Anointing, and thereby the Tongue of the Learned, to speak words in season: From you we have hitherto received the accounts given of the gradual steps of him, who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own Will; in the several gradations wherein we have not been wanting, as enabled, to pour out our hearts before him who was able to help, and are now enquiring why he hath appeared as being angry with the Prayers of his People, covering himself with a Cloud that they could not get through. If any distinct answer be given, you may expect to hear of it. In mean time that, Isa. 57. 1. *is before us, as verified, not only in the loose generation of Professors, who seem greatly hardened and estranged from the Interest of their chiefest mercies; but to true, even among those who seem to be most tenderly touched with affectionate sense of present privations, and pressures of all kinds; right laying to heart, and due considerations of such stupendous works of God, both in their present weight*

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ſuch) can be of little ſignification, while the things themſelves ſpoken of, are manifeſtly abſent. Perhaps we have ſpoken enough, if not too much for our part, now God is come to ſpeak his part, which requires much quiet attention, the rather for that though it be very loud, yet very myſterious, and deep, as are many of the Oracles of God; thoſe eſpecially wherein he deſigns to manifeſt himſelf to his, and not to the World. I could for my own part alſo lay hold on the like exemption, and ſilent retirement, as moſt befitting my preſent ſtate and frame, altogether entangled and perplexed, and preſuming that you have at hand to help not only the preſence of the great promiſed Comforter, who can ſupply all your wants, but alſo the ſecondary ſupplement of many worthy Ones, who have received the Anointing, and thereby the Tongue of the Learned, to ſpeak words in ſeaſon: From you we have hitherto received the accounts given of the gradual ſteps of him, who worketh all things according to the counſel of his own Will; in the ſeveral gradations wherein we have not been wanting, as enabled, to pour out our hearts before him who was able to help, and are now enquiring why he hath appeared as being angry with the Prayers of his People, covering himſelf with a Cloud that they could not get through. If any diſtinct anſwer be given, you may expect to hear of it. In mean time that, Iſa. 57. 1. *is before us, as veriſied, not only in the looſe generation of Profeſſors, who ſeem greatly hardened and eſtranged from the Intereſt of their chiefeſt mercies; but to true, even among thoſe who ſeem to be moſt tenderly touched with affectionate ſenſe of preſent privations, and preſſures of all kinds; right laying to heart, and due conſiderations of ſuch ſtupendous works of God, both in their preſent weight*

and future warning, is very rare, and require extra-ordinary teaching and conduct, that neither on one hand we deſpiſe, or on the other faint, when thus chaſtiſed by him. Your cry for help hence, muſt be returned with the ſame importunity, ye alſo helping by Prayer to God for us, who though at ſome perſonal diſtance, are yet in ſome ſort of Sympathy preſſed (if not above meaſure, and beyond ſtrength) yet to the utmoſt degrees of what is hitherto received; yet wiſdom and ſtrength are with him with whom we have to do, who hath graciouſly put himſelf under promiſe, that as the day is, the ſtrength ſhall be. The Lord prepare us for learning, harping, ſinging the new ſong, which is the peculiar melody of them redeemed from the Earth, which admits of no interruption from Thundrings, Earthquakes, Tempeſts, Voices; though they proceed out of the Throne, and are ſubſervient to the Ends of it.

Yours, heartily.

4th of the
4th mon. 67.

Another on the ſame occaſion.

Garments of Gladneſs, for the Spirit of Heavineſs.

My dear Siſter!

WHile there is a Spirit in Heaven, influencing ſpiritual Believers upon Earth in their frail capacities, that Word will have its verity among them, though abſent from one another in the body (how great ſoever their diſtance, and how dark ſoever their circumſtances may be) yet are they preſent in the Spirit, joyning not only in rejoycing, while order and ſtedfaſtneſs in the Faith are manifeſt, but alſo in affliction and mourning where knowledge is imparted (or though but ſuppoſed) of the hand of the Lord touching and bruiſing, eſpecially in the moſt tender part, and on ſpiritual occaſions, ſuch hath been the fellowſhip of the Spirit (through Grace I truſt) in my ſoul with you under the very heavy rebuke of the Almighty, wherewith you have been exerciſed, eſpecially of late dayes, on divers accounts, both perſonal, domeſtick, in the Church of Chriſt, where you walk in the whole *Sion* of God; and as in the Nation it ſelf, having a right and relation to its welfare, or deſolations, as I alſo am fully ſatisfied you have had with me, in divers proofs that have been put upon my Faith and Patience as far as they have come

come to your cognizance; and I hope the same Grace will not only teach us to be tender, but mutually helpful each to other toward the understanding and complyance more fully with our Father's mind in these stupendous dispensations, so as his ends upon us may be actually furthered in the promotion of the power and beauties of Holiness. Unto which issues, though godly sorrow working Repentance never to be repented of, hath a very direct tendency, and humbling our selves greatly under the mighty hand of God, is the straitest step towards the best exaltation in due time: Yet when I read the present temper (and its tendency) of my own heart, and also observe in yours, and others late lines upon this heart-breaking occasion, to what excess of sadness, fear, discouragement, and even dispondency, we are apt to yield the Tempter advantage to triumph over us, and hardly recover our selves to a jealous thought, that there is any considerable danger in the excess on that hand, but that it is a kind of vertue to refuse to be comforted; I say, in such observations my heart hath bin smitten with reproof, and somewhat awakned to stand upon its watch against incursions on that quarter, lest Satan should get an advantage on us, who should not be ignorant of his enterprizes. It's true, we have lost a Prince and great man in *Israel* this day, *But who was his Father?* 1 Sam. 10. 12. was it not the Father of Spirits, with whom the residue of the Spirit is, and who can at his pleasure set a man over the Congregation; Know we not where is the Lord God of *Elijah*, is he not in Heaven, and can do whatever he pleaseth? Is not his Spirit in Promise? Are not all the Promises of Christ Yea and Amen? Doth not the time of the Promise draw nigh of that grand effusion

effuſion of the Spirit of *Elijah*, that ſhall raiſe the Witneſſes, revive the Works, lift up the Standard, break the Yoke? have not ſome ſprinklings of the Spirit been found up and down in our dayes, and ſhould it not be owned as a token for good, and turned to us for a Teſtimony, that the Harveſt is not far off? Are not theſe diſcouraging complainings of ours, much of the ſame kind, and go upon the ſame miſtakes, and may righteouſly iſſue in the ſame diſmiſſions to us from further ſervice, as it was with *Elijah* in his fainting fit, after he had acted in ſo full a gale of the Spirit juſt before, that now he complains, They *have killed the Prophets, &c. and I, even I am left alone, and my life is ſought alſo; What am I better than my Fathers?* We know the Anſwer of God to him, which I truſt is true at this day, There is yet a remnant according to the Election of Grace, and Seed that ſhall ſerve him, and ſhall be accounted with him for a Generation. The Fathers, where are they? and do the Prophets, the Worthies live for ever? Why cry we out of loſs? God hath not *loſt* them, God *took* them, they all live to God, they are ever with the Lord. We have not loſt them, unleſs they that ſleep in Chriſt are periſhed; we ſhall go to them ſhortly, though they ſhall not return to us; We ſhall ſit down with *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*; they have not loſt themſelves, they are found in Chriſt: to die is gain; to be with Chriſt is far better; Death is theirs, becauſe they are Chriſts. The work of God hath not loſt them, if we take it in its moſt capacious comprehenſive acceptation. God hath a Will to be done not in Earth, but alſo in Heaven; they are not diſmiſſed from the King's buſineſs, who are called from

the

the Camp to the Court, advanced from being Souldiers, to be Privy Counsellors. God hath a great Family in Heaven, and Earth, and many Vessels; some above in honour, some below in dishonour. If God have fully purged any, who can grudge them to be translated as Vessels unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's immediate use, &c. Besides, look on the Work as it is below, it must be granted, That if it must alwayes proceed according to one measure or manner, by a line that we have made ready to our Lord's hand; then will the Work be deficient, and suffer loss, when those that we lay stress upon are taken away, and others cannot be found presently to clap into their places; but if the Work be the Lord's, and receiveth various appearances and representations, according to the counsel of his own Will, and yet in all go strait forward; then humbling acts passing on it, changing its beautiful appearance, laying it sometimes low, in a low place, making the fatness of its flesh lean and thin, are not to be accounted loss, or at a dead stand, by such poor worms as we, that can judge of such things only by appearance.

The wheel of divine Actings went alwayes streight forward, *Ezek.* 1. 9, 12. and returned not when they went; whither the Spirit was to go they went; and yet that work that goes alwayes streight forward, hath not alwayes liftings up above the Earth, nay, many times standeth still, *vers.* 21. Yet God is not slack concerning his Promises, nor Retrograde concerning his Work. *Gideon* may have too many, but God had never too few to do his work by; there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many, or by no might. Well, when *Moses my Servant is dead*, Josh. 1. 2.

Josh. 1.2. and that at the straits of proud swelling *Jordan*, what shall poor *Joshua* (a Servant, a slighted inferiour) do? Why, he must be strong and of a good courage, *vers.* 6. Only be strong, and very couragious, *vers.* 7. have not I commanded thee to be strong and of a good courage, be not afraid nor dismay'd, *vers.* 18. So *Deut.* 31. 6, 7, 8. such sweeping dispensations that fall upon the choicest men of *Israel*, are apt to invade the courage of the Remnant that is left, against which as Grace makes special provision to lay in matters for support, it concerns us faithfully to draw it out: Be of good courage, and God shall strengthen your hearts, all ye that trust in the Lord.

Rests,

Yours, affectionately,
for Christs sake.

To

To a Friend, upon the Releaſe of ſome, who had been divers years Impriſoned.

Dear Friend!

I Am glad if thoſe Friends come ſafe on ſhore; if there be nothing of a Witneſs to be look'd at in ſuch a lot, it's good to get to Land with all ſpeed: but if there be any thing of our being *ſet*, for the defence (or Apology) of the Goſpel, *Phil.* 1.17. though but in the ſmalleſt point of it, it may be very hazardous ſhifting places, *Acts* 27. 31. 1 *Sam.* 22. 23. 1 *Cor.* 9. 15, 16. If God look for a man in the gap, though but to defend a piece of Barley, 1 *Chron.* 11. 13, 14. or though but of Lentiles, 2 *Sam.* 23. 11, 12. If it be any part of the Heritage of *Iſrael*; it will not be eaſie anſwering that queſtion, when found in a way of eſcaping, *What doſt thou here* Eliah? It needs great care and caution to come out of *Egypt* well leavened, when the moſt are making haſte, that they may not die in the pit. When will that Roman greatneſs be out-ſhone by Chriſtian Nobility of Spirit? *Acts* 16. 37.

Yours.

30th of the
9th *mon.* 67.

Upon

Upon occaſion of a Token of ſmall value in Proviſions, ſent to him, and his fellow Priſoners.

Unto our Brethren and Friends in the bonds and bowels of the Goſpel, whoſe hearts have made them willing, under the bounteous Influences of the God of Iſrael, *to comfort the hearts of the unworthy Priſoners of the Lord in* Plymouth Iſland, *by a Coſtly Preſent, and to every one that hath contributed or helped therein, to a tender groan, or the value of a cup of cold water, be a large recompence of Reward given in Grace, and aſcertained in Glory, by him who is not unfaithful to forget ſuch labour of Love ſhewed to his Name.*

Beloved and eſteemed, as is meet in the Lord!

ALthough we are hitherto detained from the perſonal and particular knowledge of you by Name, whoſe counſels and care have been concerned in this liberal

liberal expreſſion of your Sympathy, with a few poor undeſerving creatures; in which matter we could be glad to receive diſtinct information, as far as ſuch a deſire might be thought modeſt in us to ask, and be expedient for you to grant, to the end that our Supplications for you, and Applications to you, might be more direct and particular. Yet ere that come to hand, and leſt Matth. 6. 3. *may have influenced, (though we think the reaſon of it binds not in this caſe) We thought it lay on us, not to forbear the preſent acknowledgment, ſuch as it is, (at leaſt as a fore-runner to what we ſhould be willing to offer more particularly) that hereby you might be informed, that through the Lords Providence, the whole of it came ſafe to hand, and by his Grace, we hope the heavenly voice in it hath (and through your Prayers) will yet have a more effectual acceſs to our hearts, to lay us under thoſe obligations, to a faithful, chearful, unwearied truſting in him, and waiting on him at all times, which we are ſatisfactorily perſwaded was the deſign of your deviſing thoſe liberal things for us. Under which engagements we reckon our ſelves bound at leaſt to give you ſome account of our ſelves in the preſent reſpect, That if it may be our rejoycing each in other, may be rendred more reciprocal, we comforted together with you by the mutual Faith and Love both of you and us. And firſt of all, we wiſh you knew that under the varieties and viciſſitudes of exerciſes wherewith our Heavenly Father hath ſeen good to prove and try us for ſome years together, leading us in ſome paths, and under ſome diſappointments in our Creature-concerns and accommodations, that we thought not of, and had not trod with our feet in dayes paſt; Yet hitherto hath his bountiful Proviſion and tender Care over us exalted*

it ſelf in a diſtinguiſhing manner, and many times to our admiration, ſo as hitherto our Bread hath not failed, but hath been given to us in due ſeaſon, and our Waters have been ſure; ſo that knowing how little we are yet fitted to bear, as a Father pittieth his Children in their low eſtate, he hath not proved us with hunger or with ſtraights, nor called us up to approve our ſelves his Witneſſes in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, &c. but our lot hath rather been to partake of the fat, and ſweet, and ſoft, inſomuch as if he put that Queſtion to us, to be reſolved according to that expreſs literal ſenſe of it; When I ſent you forth on the Services and Sufferings that attend your Teſtimony, and you knew not whither you went; Lacked you any thing? We muſt anſwer, Nothing, Lord, but in that reſpect have in hand, or we truſt in ſome degree of ſweet ſatisfaction, we have all, and abound, and are full, by the favour of him who giveth us all things richly to enjoy, and is (we would humbly hope) teaching us in whatſoever ſtate we are, therewith to be content. So that at many of the ſtrange preventions of loving-kindneſs, even in things of this ſort, we are often made with admiration to cry out, What is this to us, Lord! Is this after the manner of men, O God! Is this a Priſon! If we ſhould have ſought a Priſon in a Priſon theſe ſix or ſeven years, Have we yet found it! Whatever others in the ſame fellowſhip of bonds with us have found, we muſt ſay, for our parts, That as we have eſcaped the Sword, and we hope the Polutions of the Adverſary, ſo we have found great Grace in the Wilderneſs for his People, his Choſen.—— The which we mention, not only that we may praiſe the Lord together, while ye obſerve that we receive not, nor accept not ſo thankfully your Preſent in reſpect of need, through that un-

ſpeakable

ſpeakable gift and care of his who hath hitherto continued the Bread of the day in its day; but that herewithal we might take hold of an apt occaſion to take you by the hand, and lead you with a little the more encouragement up and down in thoſe wayes of the Lord, wherein we muſt ſing, Great hath been the goodneſs of our God, even in the experiences that we have paſſed practically through, in the Doctrine and Profeſſion whereof we had been trained up, in our years of plenty and proſperity; ſo that we muſt ſay, The Land that we have been ſent to ſpy out, even in the ſtraiteſt paſſages of it, as far as our Father aſſigned us to follow him in, is a very good Land; and if we rebel not againſt the Lord, but abide with him, thoſe very circumſtances that at a diſtance ſeem like ſons of Anak, *and walls reaching up to Heaven, apt to eat up the Inhabitants, are well able to be overcome, and will be found Bread for us, while we ſtand and feed in the ſtrength of the Lord, and in the majeſty of the Name of the Lord our God; ſo that theſe Serpents at a diſtance, from which we are apt to flee, are found to believing, but a rod (and that a rod of God too) when taken in the hand. And could we come forth to you in Truth and Evidence, as wiſe and right improvers of the ſenſible experiments we have actually found, taſted, ſeen, and handled hitherto of this ſort; and that the ſavour of theſe excellent things had not been diminiſhed in theſe ſouls of ours, through too much an inobſervent, careleſs, earthly diſpoſition bringing us down from our advantages of excellency; we might ſpeak more loudly to you than now we can. Oh! taſte and ſee that the Lord is good, bleſſed are they that put their truſt in him! The Lions (among whom we dwell) do want and ſuffer hunger; but they that fear the Lord, lack nothing that is good. In the midſt of*

their

their ſufficiency they are in ſtraits, while in the ſtraits (deſigned to wear out the people of the Saints of the moſt high) there is a proviſion made of ſufficiency; be ye therefore ſtrong, and very ſtrong, and very couragious, and God ſhall ſtrengthen your hearts.

And now for a thankful acknowledgement, though it may not be interpreted as any requital of your holy liberality, What ſhall we farther ſay? than that we do (as we are able) bring the matter in our requeſts and thanksgivings unto him, who is able to make all Grace abound toward you, All-ſufficiency in all things may abound to every good work, being enriched in every thing to all bountifulneſs, which cauſeth in us thanksgivings unto God. And this we beg on your behalf, not as if we deſired a gift, or that it ſhould be ſo again done to us, knowing that there are many watery faces everywhere requiring Bread to be caſt upon them, as under far greater neceſſity than our ſelves: But as having perſwaſion (and ſome ſmall experience) what a great recompence it is in ſuch caſe to have the mouth and hand opened, from the hearts being enlarged with thoſe expatiating Graces and Vertues of the Spirit of the New Teſtament, *that conſtitute a true largeneſs of heart like the Sand on the Sea-ſhore, and to encreaſe that greatneſs, that is proportionate to the large diſcoveries of believing, doing, ſuffering-Grace, and Preparations for expected Glory. In order to it, we deſire for you all, and intreat you to preſs and purſue after, (1) Greater advances toward newneſs of heart; the old heart will be as old bottles, and an old garment, that will not comport with the new Wine which is yet in the Cluſter, and a bleſſing in it, though men attempt to deſtroy it. And this is not only a newneſs of ſtate, but a newneſs alſo of frame, by means whereof the inner-man*

may pass under experimental renewings day by day, even the renewings in the Spirit of your minds, by which the Truths, Wayes, and Works of the Lord, the King, may have an intimate access and abundant enterance into your own souls, and you into them, in their vertue, dominion, and power. (2) *Greater approaches in a way of heavenliness and nearness to the Lord, at distance from the spirit of this evil World; where the World is set in the heart, the God of this World will be quickly filling it, narrowing and enclosing it for earthly service; and this not only in men of Earth, who have their portion in this life, but also in those that are by the Blood of Christ delivered from the gross pollutions of this present evil World, through lust; but yet much concerned in the business, cares, and intricating-affairs of its many things, which though lawful in themselves to be diligently prosecuted, yet as lying under the influence and advantages of the Prince of it, having a notable tendency to bring souls down from their excellency, and to eat out insensibly the liveliness and sweetness of our spirits, longer and further than the Victory that overcomes it, in the vertue of the Cross of Christ, by which we are crucified to it, and it to us, be kept up on fresh exercise.* (3) *Right waitings for, and waitings on the Spirit of Promise, who is of power to quicken dry bones, raise dead Witnesses, and do great things in and for us, which shall not be resisted, nor need not be assisted with might and power; though for a time the work about it may be made to cease with force and power. We shall say no more at present, but with the representation of our oblieged respects to every one of you, as if known by Name, leaving you in the blessed arms of our Beloved, we remain*

22th of the 9th mon. 67.

Your Brethren, waiting for the Consolation of *Israel*.

POST-SCRIPT.

IF any inquire, what might occaſion ſo much ſeverity, as to detain the *Author* ſo many years, and until death, a Priſoner? It may ſuffice to inſert here for the *Readers* ſatisfaction, That in the ſtate of his caſe, left under his hand, ſetting forth the illegality and unrighteouſneſs of proceedings againſt him, He concludes it thus;

If it ſhould be ſuggeſted, *Perhaps he is a Ring-leader*; This true Character of the Perſon, may alleviate jealouſies of that kind.

He was born at *Plymouth*, of *mean* yet *honeſt Parentage*, is not by Kindred or any Alliance related to any Perſon or Family of any Note at all, was not bred up to Learning at any Univerſity, or ſent any where to Travel for Education, or Experience; but contrariwiſe, brought up and kept diligently by his Parents to Work, in the *poor* yet *honeſt* Trade of a *FULLER*; never lived out of that Town a Month together all his life, except in a Journey ſome Weeks on occaſion, about ſixteen years ſince, to *London*; beſides what he under-went by conſtraint in Priſon. Never in the former Wars was enliſted in any Troop or Company under Pay, and in the Trained-Bands of the Town where he ſerved, never was accounted worthy of Promotion to ſo much as a Corporal, nor in the Corporation, whereof he was a Member, ever advanced ſo high as a Conſtable, never bettered his

Estate one farthing, by all the propitious advantages, that might have given him opportunity for so doing; nor is conscious to himself of the least desire of adding to what he hath, by any present or future advantages that any favourable overtures of the times may tempt him with; never was advanced to, or improved in any Place or Office of Trust or Profit, Civil, Military, or Ecclesiastical; save only for some few weeks, unknown to him, and against his will, he was Mustered a Chaplain to the *Fort*, but quickly got himself discharged of that again. Never was concerned in, nor truly charged with any Plot, Mutiny, or Tumult, giving the least disturbance or occasion of Fear, or Jealousie.

This one thing then only can remain to give colour to such proceedings, That about eighteen years since, he being convinced of his Duty to the Lord, by evidence of Scriptural Light, joyned himself in an holy Covenant, to walk in all the Ordinances of the Lord blameless, to the best of his Light and Power, in fellowship with a poor and despised People.

FINIS.